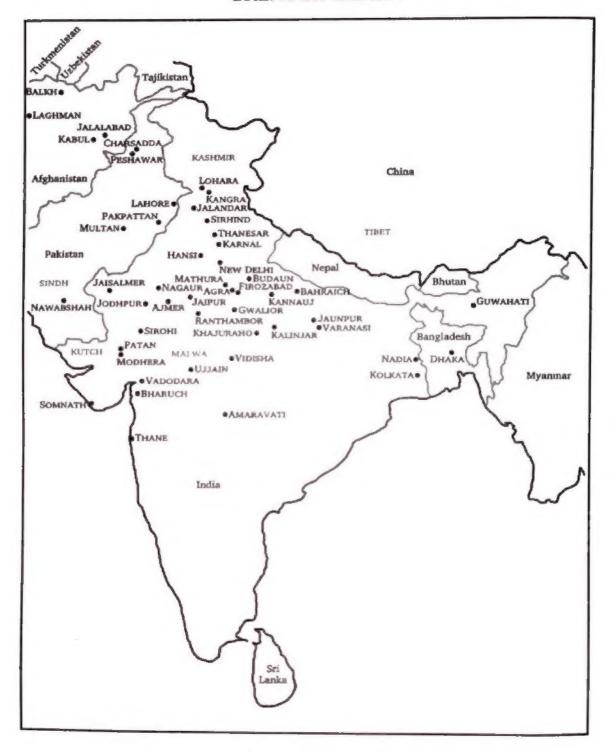


DR. RAM GOPAL MISRA was born in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh in 1931. After a brilliant academic career leading to a first class first M.A. degree in history, he retired as the Head of the Department of History in Nanak Chand Anglo Sanskrit College, Meerut. For his work he was awarded the Ph.D. degree by Meerut University. The present work is the result of a lifetime of teaching and original thinking on the part of the author.

GREATER INDIA



See www.worldhistorymaps.info/maps.html for detailed maps from different eras

Indian Resistance to Early Muslim Invaders UP TO 1206 A.D.

RAM GOPAL MISRA

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Publisher's Note

(TO THE PREVIOUS EDITION)

The official history of India is more than often documented through a predominantly Western perspective. According to this view, the Muslim invaders had a virtual cakewalk over their Indian adversaries who were divided in terms of caste and were blinded by superstition of the worst order. What is shocking is that this view by left-modernist historians virtually justifies Islamic invasion of India as a positive move towards a classless society.

It is time to view history in the right perspective. The painstaking research undertaken by Dr. Ram Gopal Misra is a significant step in the right direction.

Through copious references to original texts, the author has established that Muslim invaders found it very tough to sweep the Hindu bastions. More often than not, they succeeded only after resorting to unfair means, which were unheard of by the chivalrous Hindu kings of those days. From this book, it is amply clear that the Muslim kings had a very tough time in controlling the "Hindu masses" that refused to convert en masse as it had happened in Central Asia.

The author says that it took the Muslim invaders nearly five hundred years to occupy the central stage in India, while they easily swept the Central Asian region through a deadly mix of brute barbaric armies and jehadi Islamic ideology which justified victory by any means.

This book is a testimony to the stiff Indian resistance to the Islamic invaders in the medieval age. It is also a fitting tribute to the Indian kings and subjects who sacrificed their lives so that their nation might live. Perhaps India is the only country to have retained its own unique cultural identity despite a thousand-year-old history of relentless Muslim onslaught.

This book is handy for research scholars as well as for lay readers to understand the dynamics of Indian resistance to Muslim invaders up to 1206 CE.

We are thankful to the author for enabling us to bring out this important publication and giving us the permissions to print the second edition of his book.

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THE PUBLISHERS

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I also thank the various officials of the numerous libraries and institutions consulted by me, notably, the Department Library, Aligarh Muslim University; National Library, Calcutta; the Archaeological Survey of India Library, Calcutta; the Archaeological Survey of India Library; and the National Archives.

In the end, I must thank my wife Lila Misra, who has toiled a lot, for arranging and reading the manuscript and proofs.

Preface

(TO THE FIRST EDITION)

The present thesis is an attempt to provide a connected account of the prolonged and sustained efforts made by the Indians to stem the tide of early Muslim invaders. The political and military resistance was spread over more than five and a half centuries till its final collapse in Northern India in the last decade of the twelfth century A.D. For long, the historians of India have emphasized merely the ultimate collapse of the Indians, ignoring completely the earlier resistance offered by them. It is a fact of history that such sustained resistance as encountered by the Muslim armies in India was not faced by them in any other land conquered by them. If the present thesis helps to correct the imbalance even in a small measure, I shall feel my labours sufficiently rewarded.

The Indian Resistance had another facet, which was outcome of the resolute determination of the Indians to preserve their religious and cultural identity. While country after country, from the Strait of Gibraltar to the banks of the Indus, witnessed the rapid Islamization of their individual cultures, Northern India managed to survive as a predominantly 'heathen' land even after five centuries of Muslim rule. Mine is a humble attempt

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to explain this seeming paradox of the indestructibility of India's cultural vitality and the social and moral degeneration of the Indian society on the eve of Muslim invasion. The historians have merely emphasized the latter part of this seeming paradox.

Meerut October 1983 RAM GOPAL MISRA

Introduction

ROM THE VERY dawn of history, India has been known as a land of plenty. Its fertile valleys and plains of the north have held the lure for foreign invaders to conquer and very often to settle down permanently. Through its mountain passes in the northwest—the Khyber and the Bolan—have come wave after wave of foreign invaders, eager to displace the previous settlers from the fertile lands of modern Punjab and the Indo-Gangetic plains. The ever-present danger of these invasions inculcated among the Indians a fierce spirit of resistance to the invader, an aspect which has not been duly stressed by historians.

The reason is that the historians during the British rule (and to a large extent to this day) were working with an imperialist bias toward history-writing. Therefore the history of India during the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries is the history of a country under colonial domination. As Warren Fusfeld told in [an academic paper presented at] a seminar held under the auspices of *Indian History and Culture Society* from 19th to 21st February 1979 –

...it is notable that part of what is unsatisfactory about writings on the history of British India is tied to the process of selection. This process has resulted in some historians writing on the British in India, rather than India

under the British (the first topic being simply a subset of the second). Others have chosen to write about Indians in British India but have chosen for study those groups who were most outspoken, either in opposition to British. or with respect to the condition of Indian society with an eye on reforming it, so as to make it more congruous with their sense of what was "modern" and therefore more correct. As "modern" could more often, rather appropriately, termed "western", the study of such reforms also tends to present us with a view from a "western" or British perspective.1

During the British period the needs of the imperialist rule dictated that Indians be pictured as an inferior people in respect of material, moral, and intellectual accomplishments. This deliberate denigration of the Indian nation was furthered by the incapacity of the foreigner to understand properly a civilization so different from their own. So in course of time, as our political subjugation became complete, we happened to accept as real the distored image of ourselves that we saw reflected in the mirror the British held before us.

Swami Vivekananda told a group of students more than a century ago [c. 1891 at Alwar, Rajputana] -

... The histories of our country written by English [and other Western] writers cannot but be weakening to our minds, for they talk only of our downfall. How can foreigners, who understand very little of our manners and customs, or religion and philosophy, write faithful and unbiased histories of India? Naturally, many false notions and wrong inferences have found their way to them.2

¹ Warren, Fusfeld. 'Indifference to Religious Sources for Political History.' Bias in Indian Historigraphy. Ed. Devahuti. Delhi: D K Publications, 1980. p. 31

² The Life of Swami Vivekananda by his Eastern and Western Disci-

He exhorted the young students -

Now it is for us to strike out an independent path of historical research for ourselves, to study the Vedas and Purânas and the ancient annals of India, and from these make it our life's Sâdhanâ to write accurate, sympatheic and soul-inspiring histories of the land. It is for the Indians to write Indian history.³

This however requires a sufficient knowledge of our history, particularly of people's social, political, and economic life. But there are long gaps of darkness about which not much of anything is known. One such period is the gap between the decline of the Mughal power and the arrival of the European trading companies and the ultimate consolidation of British power. The Late Sri. Dharampalji of Sarva Sewa Sangh, Wardha very painstakingly tried to fill that gap by his untiring efforts and brought out several volumes about the different aspects of the social, political, economical, and industrial accomplishments in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

As Sri. Jayaprakash Narayan very aptly wrote in his Foreword to the book *Civil Disobedience in India Tradition*⁴ by Sri. Dharampal –

The saddest part of the story Shri Dharampal unfolds in the following pages tells of the conscious and calculated efforts of the British to destroy every vestige of the old tradition, which they looked upon as a continuing challenge to the very foundations of their rule. Whether it was to assert the 'dignity of the State' or for the 'maintenance of public tranquility' or for 'upholding those

ples. Second edition. Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1960. pp. 213-14 3 Ibid., p. 214

⁴ Dharampal. Civil Disobedience in India Tradition. Varanasi: Sarva Seva Sangh Prakashan, 1971

sentiments of respect which it appeared so essential that the community should entertain for the public authority', the traditional right of the people of peaceful resistance had to be given no quarter. The reason Shri Dharampal gives, with which I am in agreement, is the feeling the British rulers had of extreme insecurity. They could not feel safe until they had beaten the people into a state of unquestioning obedience. The ultimate sanction they relied upon to achieve this end was military force.

It was this extreme sense of insecurity which forced them to invent stories of Aryan invasion by those who were supposed to live in Central Asia, the resistance put by the Dravidians to that invasion, who themselves were supposed to have migrated from Sumeria and subjugated the original inhabitants of this 'sub-continent' and either enslaved them or pushed them in to forests and hills, who form today's scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Even today after sixty years of Independence, this history is being taught in our schools. However many scholars in the latter half of the twentieth century have exploded the myth of Aryan Invasion.

One of them, David Frawley (Vamadeva Shastri), says in the first edition of his book *The Myth of Aryan Invasion of India*,

The Dravidian and Aryan invasion theories turns the migration of particular language/racial groups from Central Asia into a kind of panacea to explain the developments of race and language for much of humanity, particularly for India. However, both invasion theories appear far too simplistic given the complex ways in which cultures, languages and races move and interact. 5

⁵ Frawley, David. The Myth of The Aryan Invasion of India. New Delhi: Voice of India, 1994. p. 42

The linguistic divide between Aryan and Dravidian, as that between the Indo-European and other language groups is also now being questioned. A greater Nostratic family of languages has been proposed that includes Indo-European, Dravidian and Semitic languages and looks for a common ancestor for all three. This requires a greater degree of contact between these groups which remote Central Asia cannot afford. Moreover, there are affinities between Sanskrit and the Munda or aboriginal languages of India, as S. Kalyanaraman has noted, that indicate a long and early contact, if not common evolution, which could have only happened in India. Such Vedic scholars as Sri Aurobindo have stated that the Dravidian and Sanskritic languages have much more in common than has yet been admitted and appear to have a common ancestor.

Dravidian history does not contradict Vedic history either. It credits the invention of the Tamil language, the oldest Dravidian tongue, to the rishi Agastya, one of the most prominent sages in the Rig Veda. Dravidian kings historically have called themselves Aryans and trace their descent through Manu (who in the Matsya Purana is regarded as originally a South Indian king). Apart from language, moreover, both North and South India share a common religion and culture...

The propositions of time, place and people for the Aryan invasion has continually shifted as it has always been a theory in search of facts, not one based on anything solid. The only logical conclusion of the continual retreat of the Aryan invasion theory from a destructive invasion to a pastoral migration is the complete abandonment of it. The continual changes in the theory relative to the data which disproves it only shows the invalidity at its core.

⁶ Ibid., p. 43

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The Aryan invasion has gone from a bang to whimper and will soon fade out altogether.7

In other words there is no racial evidence of an Indo-Aryan invasion of India, or of any populations that have been driven out of north India to the south, but only of a continuity of the same group of people who have traditionally considered themselves to be Aryan in culture...

Battles mentioned in the Rig Veda, whether between those called Aryans or Dasyus, are largely between the "five peoples" (pancha manava). These five are identified as the Turvashas, Yadus, Purus, Anus and Druhyus, which the Puranas describe as originating from the five sons of Yayati, an early Vedic king in the lunar dynasty descended from Manu, and the son of Nahusha...8

These five peoples were styled either Arya or Dasyu, which mean something like good or bad, holy or unholy according to their behavior. Their designation can shift quickly. The descendants of an Aryan king can be called Dasyu or its equivalent (Rakshasa, Dasa, Asura, etc.), if their behavior changes.

...Aryans and the Dasyus are not a racial or linguistic but a religious or spiritual divide, which changes along with human behavior.

Vedic battles are mainly among the Vedic people who are divided into various kingdoms, large and small, much as we find in the Mahabharata itself...¹⁰

⁷ Ibid., p. 22

⁸ Ibid., p. 34

⁹ Ibid., pp. 35-36

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 36

We can compare the Vedic wars with those of Europe. However fierce such battles were they were like the conflicts between the Catholics and Protestants or between the Germans the French, struggles between related peoples and religions, who also had long periods of peace between them besides the more dramatic periods of conflict. We don't have to bring in the idea of outside invaders to explain these conflicts and certainly Vedic and Puranic literature does not support this. 11

Vedic texts like Shatapatha [13.5.4] and Aitareya Brahmanas [8.21–23]... [mention that]...Lands of the Vedic people...[extended]...from Gandhara (Afghanistan) in the West to Videha (Bihar) in the East, and South to Vidarbha (Maharashtra), as well as from the Western to the Eastern oceans. The lands mentioned in the Vedas are much vaster in scope than those in any other ancient literature. The Vedas are hardly the pronouncements of a limited local culture or new intruders who had not yet known the region. They speak of a region equivalent to the region of Europe from the Baltic to the Mediterranean seas and from Spain to Poland. 12

We take recourse to the Hindu epics of Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābharata, which contain a number of references to the Indians' struggle with the Pahlavas or the Pārasīkas. According to the Sabhā-parva of the Mahā-bhārata, Yudhiṣṭhira, while performing the Rājasūya-yajña, dispatched his brothers to conquer countries in all directions. Nakula, one of his brothers, vanquished Barbara-s [Berbers], Kirāta-s [hunters], Yavana-s [Greeks], Śaka-s [Scythians], and Pahlava-s [Persians], who were

¹¹ Ibid., p. 39

¹² Ibid., p. 44

forced to pay tributes.¹³ In the Indian tradition both Rāmayaṇa and Mahābhārata have been considered as 'itihāsa' or history, though not in the Western sense of the term where history means a geneology of kings, their wars and exploits accompanied by a chronology of events with proper dates. And hence the Western scholars during the British regime in India doubted the very historicity of Mahābhārata war. But subsequently many scholars appeared on the scene to study the Indian texts to create an authentic history of India according to their own perceptions.

Foundations of Indian historical research were laid down by Sir William Jones, who was the Founder and President of the Royal Asiatic Society established in Bengal in 1784, the aim of which was to study the history and antiquities, the arts, science, and literature of Asia. Sir William Jones had travelled widely in West Asia and India and he died in 1794. According to him the conquest of Sri Lanka by Rāma was during 1200 BCE and he further thought that Sandrokottos of Greek historians was none other than Candra-gupta Maurya who was, hence, a contemporary of Alexander. Afterwards Col. Wilford and Prof. Lassen supported him by stating that the Sanskrit drama Mudrā-rākṣasa also supports the identity of Sandrokottos with Candra-gupta Maurya.

These two things – Alexander's invasion in 327–26 BCE and the identification of Sandrokottos as Candragupta Maurya were considered as the sheet-anchor of Indian history. Later on many other scholars like Max

^{13 [}The following are some relevant passages – "...सिन्धुकूलाश्रिता ये च ग्रामणेया..." (Sabhā-parva 29.8); "रमठान् हारहूणांश्च प्रतीच्या:..." (S. 29.11); "ततः सागरकुक्षिस्थान्भ्रेच्छान्परमदारुणान् । पद्मवान्बर्बरांश्चेव तान्मर्वाननयद्वराम् ॥" (S. 29.15) —Editor]

Müller, Vincent Smith, Frederick Pargiter, etc. came on the scene. Their strenuous efforts and deep, critical, and prolonged study created a whirlwind of alternative views and doubts to such an extent that the real facts became obliterated. After Indian Independence however, a host of Indian scholars, with an insight into the traditions, beliefs, and customs of the Indian masses, appeared on the scene. T S Narayan Shastry, N Jagannath Rao, Kota Venkatachalam, etc. repudiated the sheet-anchor theory of the Westerners and on the basis of genealogies in the *Purāṇas*, fixed the date of beginning of the *Kali-yuga* as 3102 BCE. In his book *The Theogony of Hindoos*, Count Björnstjerna writes,

According to the astronomical calculations of the Hindoos, the present period of the world, Kali-Yug, commenced 3102 years before the birth of Christ on the 20th of February, at 2 hours, 27 minutes, and 30 seconds, the time being thus calculated to minutes and seconds. They say that a conjunction of the planets took place, and their tables show this conjuction... The calculation of the Brahmins is so exactly confirmed by our own astronomical tables, says [Jean Sylvain] Bailly, that nothing but actual observation could have given so corresponding a result. 14

This beginning of the Kali era or Kali-yugābda has been accepted generally by all important historians and astronomers. This phenomenon of coming together of seven planets in Meṣa [Aries] occurred thirty-six years after the Mahābhārata war and coincided with the passing away of Bhagavān Śrīkṛṣṇa. This then has been fixed as the sheet-anchor of Indian history by Indian scholars

¹⁴ Björnstjerna, Count M. The Theogony of Hindoos. London: John Murray, 1844. pp. 34–35

and the chronology of different events and personali. ties has been adjusted accordingly.15

Thus before the advent of Islam, for nearly two thousand years, there is no permanent road-block in the development of the country's political, cultural, and social life. The inroads of the Greeks, the Saka-s [Scythians], the Kuṣāṇa-s [Kushans], and the Hūṇa-s [Huns] were only temporary episodes. The vitality of Indian society and culture easily absorbed them all. But with the advent of the Arabs in India, the human flood threatened to sweep India and permanently impair the whole political and cultural solidarity of the country. The rise of Islam and its confrontation with India's cultural vitality will form the subject matter of the first chapter.

15 [Five major events and dates are given below –	
3138 BCE	Mahābhārata War; Birth of Parīkṣit;
	Yudhişthira's coronation
3102 BCE	Śrīkṛṣṇa niryāṇa;
	Start of the Kali-yuga (Pramāthi samvatsara)
3012 BCE	Janamejaya's gift deed (Plavanga samvatsara)
57 BCE	Era of Vikramāditya (Vikrama Saṃvat)
78 CE	Era of Śālivāhana (Śaka Saṃvat)

Those interested to see the complete list of events and dates may refer to pp. 36-38 of Rajendra Singh Kushwaha's Glimpses of Bhāratiya History (New Delhi: Ocean Books, 2003)

Although the list of events and dates was cited in toto in the previous edition of this book, it was thought prudent to omit the same in the present edition, for these dates appear to be determined purely based on astronomical calculations and are off the mark when seen in light of other historical evidence. —Ed.]

1

The Expansion of Islam and its Confrontation with India's Cultural Vitality

THE RISE OF Islam, the third and latest of the monotheistic religions of the world after Judaism and Christianity, and its meteoric expansion is an event of great importance in world history. The Prophet Muḥammad began preaching this new faith in 610 CE in Arabia, which was at that time one of the most backward parts of the world. Before the rise of Islam, the tribes of Arabia dissipated all their energies in trivial and constant fighting among themselves. Prophet Muḥammad and his new creed rescued them from this state of chronic anarchy.¹

^{1 [}This oft-repeated but incorrect version of the history of Arabia before the advent of Islam is largely taken from the pages of the Islamic chronicles says Sita Ram Goel (in Hindu Temples and What Happened to Them, his two-volume pièce de résistance). The Islamic chronicles—written mostly by religious-minded writers—paint a rather skewed picture of history and it is not surprising that they make the outlandish claim that pre-Islamic India was "...an area of darkness to which Islam brought illumination for the first time..."

-p. 264 of Hindu Temples and What Happened to Them, Vol. 2 (Second enlarged edition) (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1993)

The essential significance of the appearance of Muhammad ibn Abdulla, a Quraish of the Hashim Clan, is the crystallisation of a new experience of the divine which welded all those who shared it into a new kind of community.²

Islam is essentially a religion of submission and surrender to the will of the Omnipotent God and Creator and it is His irresistible will which binds the community together. The Prophet himself speaks,

"Truly, my prayers and my devotion and my life and my death belong to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. He has no companion and that is what I am bidden; for I am the first of the Muslims."

Prophet Muḥammad was certainly not the first to preach monotheism. But what differentiates Islam from earlier monotheistic religions, as pointed out by Shāh Walī-ullāh, "...is not merely the affirmation of the unity of Godhead but also the rejection of all other gods except God." Lā'ilāha'ill-āllāh—no god except Allāh is the cardinal dogma of Islam.

Fritz Hommel writes that, "...we owe [our knowledge of the history of pre-Islamic Arabia] partly to inscriptions found in the country [perhaps alluding to the Arab nations], partly in contemporary literatures and monuments of other nations (Babylonians and Assyrians, Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks and Romans) and partly also (for the centuries immediately preceding Muhammad) to early Islamic tradition." (Ibid., p. 266) —Editor]

2 Von Grunebaum, G. E. Classical Islam: A History 600–1258. Tr. Watson, Katherine. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1970. p. 27 3 Al-Qur'ān 4.162–63 [In other words, chapter (sŭrah) 4 and verses (āyāt) 162 and 163 — Ed.]

4 Hujjat-ullah al-Balighah, Chapter XXXVII on Tauhid, pp. 58-59. Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961) on p. 1 in fn. 1

Before his death in Medina in 632 CE, the Prophet of Islam had swept away all tribalism and factionalism from among most of the Arabs, united them with the bond of an indestructible religion and established a State, centred at Medina, with its own laws and institutions. Most parts of Arabia owed allegiance to the new State. After his death in 632 CE, four of his companions succeeded him as leaders of the Muslim community. They assumed the title of *Khalifah* [Caliph] which literally means 'one who follows behind' or 'successor.' The period of the first four Caliphs, i.e. 632 to 661 CE, is "...regarded as a Golden Age in which pristine Islamic virtues flourished."

The first Caliph, Abū Bakr (r. 632–34 CE), restored the authority of Medina over the various Arab tribes which had renounced their allegiance to Islam, and had reverted to their pre-Islamic faith.

The history of real expansion of Islam outside Arabia starts during the Caliphate [Khilāfah] of the second Caliph, 'Umar (r. 634–44 CE). It was under his vigorous leadership that they City-State of Medina developed into a Universal State. He assumed the title of 'Amīr al-

Apart from Abū Bakr, who died of an illness, the other three Caliphs were assassinated; this gives us a sense of the political instability in early Islam. —Ed.1

^{5 [}Following Muḥammad's death in 632 CE, the Islamic world was ruled by four Caliphs who are hailed (mainly in Sunni Islam) as the 'rightly guided Caliphs' (al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn) —

^{1.} Abū Bakr Abdullāh ibn 'Uthmān (573-634 CE)

^{2. &#}x27;Umar ibn al-Khattāb (584-644 CE)

^{3. &#}x27;Uthman ibn 'Affan (c. 583-656 CE)

^{4. &#}x27;Alī ibn 'Abī Ṭālib (601-661 CE)

⁶ Bosworth, Clifford Edmund. The Islamic Dynasties: A Chronological and Genealogical Handbook. Islamic Surveys (Vol. 5). Edinburgh: University Press, 1967. p. 4

Mu'minin - Commander of the Faithful - which implied "...a spiritual as well as political element in his leadership." He turned the martial energies of the Arabs against the only two world powers of the time - the Byzantine and the Sāsānīd [or Sāsānīan] Empires.

Within a generation of the Prophet's death, the primitive Arab, fired by the indestructible faith and imbued with an utter contempt of death, had become the master of the Byzantine territories of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt and the Sāsānīd territories of Persia and Iraq. Such rapid expansion of religious and military power is without a parallel in the annals of world history.

There was enough in the teachings of Muhammad to inspire his followers to embark on a proselytising mission of converting humanity to Islam. Al-Qur'an declares.

Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and his Apostle nor acknowledge the true religion (even if they are) of the people of the Book, until they pay the Jizyaha with willing submission and feel subdued."

The Prophet made clear distinction between the scriptureless idolators of Arabia and the 'People of the Book ('Ahl al-Kitāb).'10

For the former a period of grace was allowed after which it was ordained for the faithful to "...fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them, and seize

them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem."11 This policy had to be followed until "... they repent and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity."12

This faith that they were doing God's work, united and fortified the Arab people and within a century of the Prophet's death, the empire of the Caliphs had become a world power. They dominated Central Asia and North Africa, in the west, they touched the shores of the Atlantic and in the east, were knocking at the gates of India.

It is surprising that none of the countries conquered by the Arabs during the eighth century CE offered any successful or prolonged resistance to Arab invaders.13 After Abū Bakr had united Arabia, Islam was ready to march abroad. Syria was the first Byzantine territory to face the Arabs. The Byzantines discovered that the Arabian horse and the camel had given the Arabs an irresistible weapon of greater mobility. Damascus, the oldest city of the world14 fell [in September 635 CE] after a six-month siege and the whole of Syria was conquered within a year, 635-36 CE.

Next year, 'the warriors of Allah' turned against the Persians. In the year 637 CE, a great Sāsānīd army dis-

⁷ Ibid., pp. 3-4

^{8 [}Jizyah is a tax levied on non-Muslim citizens (dhimmis) in States governed by Islamic law (shariyaḥ) —Ed.} 9 Al-Qur'an 9.29

¹⁰ The Delhi Sultanat (A.D. 1206-1526). 'A Comprehensive History of India' (Vol. 5). Eds. Habib, Mohammad and Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1970. p. 12

¹¹ Al-Qur'an 9.5

¹² Ibid.

^{13 [}Even if they did offer resistance, we hardly have any records that prove it. And it is likely that the few chronicles that might have existed were destroyed under Islamic rule. -Ed.]

¹⁴ Hitti, Philip K. History of the Arabs. Third edition. London: Macmillan and Co., 1946. p. 150

[[]Western scholars often hail Damascus as the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world but that epithet truly belongs to the holy city of Benares (also called Kāśī or Vārāṇasī), which has been inhabited at least since the period of the Mahabharata. -Ed.]

solved in panic on a day of dust-storms.¹⁵ The Persian emperor and his troops deserted the Iraqian capital Ctesiphon and the Moslems entered the royal city without a fight.¹⁶ The conquest of Persia proper took a little longer and "...about a decade was needed to complete the conquest."¹⁷ By 643 CE, the boundaries of the Caliphate touched the frontiers of India.

The story of the triumphant march of the Muslim army was repeated in the west. The great Arabian general 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ invaded the ancient land of Egypt, the gateway to the countries of North Africa. Alexandria, the base of the Byzantine navy, was captured within a year (640–41 CE), without "...a single ship, no siege machines." 'Amr took the Prophet's banner of the eagle further west into Tripoli, the land of the Berbers.

After this first stage of expansion, the Muslims concentrated on the conquest of Turkish speaking territories of Outer Mongolia, Bukhara, Tashkand, Samarqand, etc. The supremacy of Islam in Central Asia was so firmly established that the Chinese ceased to dispute it.¹⁹

The third stage of Muslim expansion began in 711–712 CE. In that year, Muḥammad bin al-Qāsim subdued Sindh [Sindhū] and Mūltān [Mūlasthāna] and Islam got the first foothold in India. Simultaneously in the west, the Muslims under Mūsa bin Nuṣayr, one of the greatest generals of early Islam, pushed though the Berber countries of the North African coast to the Atlantic.

In 711 CE, Mūsa dispatched his Berber general Ṭāriq across the Gibraltar strait into Spain. The Spanish King Roderick was defeated the same year and "...he simply disappeared." "After this decisive victory, the march of the Moslems through Spain almost amounted to a promenade." "21

Mūsa, who had himself rushed to Spain, was recalled by the Caliph but his successors had only small territories left to conquer and within seven years "...the conquest of the peninsula, one of the fairest and largest provinces of medieval Europe, was effected." Spain became a province of the Caliphate with the Arabic name of al-Andalus. 23

In 720 CE, the Muslims crossed the Pyrennes and gradually subdued the southern half of France. In 732 CE, however, the Arab general 'Abd-ar-Rahmān was defeated and killed in a battle, fought between [the French cities of] Tours and Poitiers, by Charles, the 'Martel' (hammer). The Arab expansion in Europe had reached a standstill.²⁴

Thus by 732 CE, which marked the first centenary of the Prophet's death, the Arabs had set up the largest and most powerful empire of the world, "...extending

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 155

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 156

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 157

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 164

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 210

²⁰ Ibid., p. 494

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., p. 498

²³ Ibid.

^{24 [}Sita Ram Goel writes, "The same Islamic armies, however, had to struggle for 69 long years to make their first effective breach in the borders of India. In the next three centuries, they pushed forward in several provinces of Northern and Western India. But at the end of it all, India was far from being conquered militarily or assimilated culturally. The Arab invasion of India ended in a more or less total failure." – pp. 9–10 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) —Ed.]

from the Bay of Biscay to the Indus and the frontiers of China, from the Aral Sea to the Upper Nile."25

Astounding as these victories of Islamic armies were. equally amazing is the ease and rapidity with which peoples of different creeds and races were assimilated within the Islamic fold. Syrians, Persians, Berbers, Negroes, Turks, and others - all were rapidly Islamized and their language and culture Arabicized. Of all world religions Islam attained the largest measure of success in demolishing the barriers of race, colour, and nationality within the confines of its own community.26

Of course, the process of assimilation was not without its stresses and strains. A large body of Persians. who could not reconcile to the religion and culture imposed upon them by the Arabs, abandoned their hearths and homes at the close of the seventh century CE, and set sail with their women and children for the coast of India and landed in Gujarat "...near the site of the later colony of Sanjan."27 The end of the Umayyad dynasty28 of the Caliphs in the great bloodbath of 750 CE, has been traced by many Orientalists to "...the struggle or conflict between the Aryanism of Iran and the Semitism of Arabia."29

But, in reality, the struggle was more secular than racial. The masses of non-Arab peoples, particularly the Persians, were beginning to resent their position as second class citizens. Besides, the empire of the Caliphs, which had grown to huge dimensions, could only be maintained by extraordinarily capable men, who could control the distant Governors and suppress the local rebels. Thus the real significance of the transition of the Caliphate from the Umayyads to the Abbāsīds30 in 750 CE, is that "...an essentially secular 'kingdom'... was replaced by the 'Imamat', which emphasized the religious character of the highest office of the state."31

But the authority of the Caliph, who symbolized the unity of the Islamic world, could not continue for long. After al-Mu'tasim Bi'llah (r. 833-842 CE), the eighth of the Abbasids, the remaining Caliphs were pawns in the hands of the Turkish guards whom al-Mu'tasim had organised. Later on, the role of the Turkish guards was assumed by the Saljuq and the Khwarezmian [Khwārāzmsāhyān] Sultāns. In 1258 CE, their line of the Abbasids was made extinct by the Mongol leader, Halaku Khan.

But the myth of the Caliphate continued even after that. References to "...the 'Commander of the Faithful' on the coins, even when his name was not known, symbolized the unity of the Muslim world."32

²⁵ Ibid., p. 215

^{26 [}There might be some truth to this statement, but we must bear in mind at all times that even within the confines of Islam, there is discrimination against adherents of other Islamic denominations, religion-sanctioned misogyny, and violent reactions to believers who dare to question the faith. Further, there is always a superior position accorded to the ulemā class. -Ed.]

²⁷ Commissariat, M S. A History of Gujarat. Vol. 1. Bombay: Longmans, Gree & Co., 1938. p. LI

^{28 [}The Umayyad Caliphate (al-Khilāfah al-'Umawiyah) succeeded the four Rāshidūn Caliphs and spanned from 661 to 750 CE. —Ed.] 29 Encyclopedia of Islam. Vol. 1. Leiden: E J Brill, 1954. p. 16b

^{30 [}The Abbasid Caliphate (al-Khilāfah al-'Abbāsiyah) succeeded the Umayyad Caliphate and spanned from 750 to 1517 CE. -Ed.] 31 Goitein, Shelomo Dov. 'A Turning Point in the History of the Muslim State.' Islamic Culture. Vol. 23. Hyderabad: Islamic Culture Board, 1949. p. 120

³² The Delhi Sultanat (A.D. 1206-1526). 'A Comprehensive History of India' (Vol. 5). Eds. Habib, Mohammad and Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1970. p. 32

Thus even after the destruction of the symbolic centre of Islam, the Islamic religion and culture survived and dominated the life of the converted who belonged to diverse racial and ethnic groups. Barely a generation afterwards, even the Mongols who were responsible for the downfall of the Caliphate, themselves adopted the Islamic faith.

An explanation of this seeming miracle of the political and culture development of Islam is not merely to be found in the strength of the Muslim arms alone, but also in the cultural and social power of the new faith. In a medieval world torn by the barriers of class and creed, Islam proclaimed the complete social and legal equality of men, albeit, within the faith. The Prophet Muḥammad's last speech at Mecca33 is a remarkable exposition of the principles of Muslim brotherhood -

The Arab is not superior to the non-Arab; the non-Arab is not superior to the Arab... Verily all Muslims are brothers.

If a deformed Abyssinian slave holds authority over you and leads you according to the Book of Allah, obey him.

Islam with its message of a classless society was welcomed with open hands by the subject peoples smarting under a degenerate Christianity and an equally degenerate Zoroastrianism of the medieval ages. The Roman laws of the Byzantine empire were based on the most invidious class distinctions while their social fabric was sustained by large-scale forced labour in place of which Islam instituted free labour. The Sāsānīd society was equally degenerate and priest-ridden.

Only three classes, the clergy, the military aristocracy and the landowners, were taken into consideration: the fourth class the merchants and manufacturers had no privileges, such as were accorded exclusively to the abovementioned classes.34

It was for the peoples of such social systems and creeds that Islam appeared as a deliverer from all evils and no wonder that within a short space of time Islam succeeded in almost wholesale Islamization of the people from the shores of the Atlantic to the banks of the Indus (Sindhū).

In the case of India, with whom political and cultural contact of Islam started soon after the death of Prophet Muḥammad, the story is much different. Here Islam was confronted by a living faith as old as human civilization itself. More than a thousand years before Islam, the Upanisads had declared the truth of God or the Cosmic Personality which is immanent in Nature, both animate and inanimate, which transcends Nature and which is the absolute Reality. Here there had never been a distinction between a believer and a non-believer. Did not the Lord proclaim in his 'Song Celestial' -

In whatever way men identify with Me, in the same way do I carry out their desires; men pursue My path, Partha, in all ways.35

Whatever form any devotee with faith wishes to worship, I make that faith of his steady.36

36 Ibid., 7.21

³³ Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century. Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961. p. 3

³⁴ Narıman, G K. Barthold's Iran. Bombay: Minocher E Dadrawala, 1906. p. 38 [Translated from the Russian writings of Wilhelm Barthold (Vasily Vladimirovich Bartold). -Ed.]

³⁵ Bhagavad-gita 4.11 [In other words, chapter (adhyāya) 4 and verse (śloka) 11 —Ed.]

It was this complete freedom granted to the individual in the matter of faith which was responsible for the bewildering growth of the Hindu pantheon. But these 'thirty-three crore deities that constitute this panthe. on'37 were all subservient to the Immanent Reality driving this Universe – symbolized by the Chariot and the Charioteer.

It was through the fables and stories connected with these deities contained in the Rāmāyana, the Mahābhāra. ta, and the Puranas that the ideals of Indo-Aryan culture permeated in the lives of the multitude. Later on, following the example of Buddhism and Jainism, its own offshoots, these deities were enshrined in the temples situated in every nook and corner of India. It was through pilgrimages to these holy places that even the unlettered masses, whose mental horizon might have otherwise remained confined to their own region or province, came to regard this vast land as their own, worthy of the abode of Gods. No wonder, that the Indians developed a sense of superiority and pride in their own land and culture which al-Biruni so graphically portrays [in his Kitāb al-Hind] - "...the Hindus believe there is no country but theirs...no other race of man but theirs."39 Three centuries after al-Birūni, 'Amir Khusrau [Abu'l Hasan Yamin ud-Din Khusrau] was deeply moved by the abiding faith of the Hindus, which political subjection failed to mitigate. He says,

And you, who taunt the Hindus for being idolators, should as least condescend to take a lesson from the sincerity of their faith.⁴⁰

All the early Arab travellers speak about the inherent qualities of tolerance and universality of outlook of the Hindus in matter of faith.

Al-Birūnī writes,

...according to the Hindu philosophers, liberation in common to all castes and to the whole human race, if their intention of obtaining it is perfect. This view is based on the saying of Vyâsa: "Learn to know the twenty-five things [principles] thoroughly, then you may follow whatever religion you like; you will no doubt be liberated."

Through this broad-based outlook in matters of faith, India—much before the advent of Islam—had been adopted by men of diverse races and creeds as their happy home where under the benevolent influence of Indian culture, they co-existed peacefully without seeking hegemony or mutual extermination.

With its characteristic liberalism, Hinduism also welcomed the early peaceful Muslim immigrants into India. The accounts of early Arab travellers and geographers starting from the merchant Sulaiman [Sulaymān al-Tājir] (851 CE), 'Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī al-Mas'ūdī (915 CE), Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm bin Muḥammad al-Fārsī al-Iṣṭakhrī (951 CE), and ibn Haukal [Muḥammad Abū'l-Qāsim ibn Ḥawqal] (976 CE),

³⁷ Mookerji, Radhakumud. Nationalism in Hindu Culture. Delhi: S Chand, 1957. p. 37

^{38 [}Abū Rayḥān Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bırūnī (c. 973–1050 CE); also known as 'Alberuni' —Ed.]

³⁹ Sachau, Edward C. Alberuni's India. Vol. 1. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1910. pp. 22-23 [Translation of the Kitāb al-Hind of al-Bīrūnī—Ed.]

⁴⁰ Husain, Yusuf. Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1959. p. 125

⁴¹ Sachau, Edward C. Alberuni's India. Vol. 1. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1910. p. 104

all speak about the generous treatment to the peaceful Muslims accorded by Indian rulers. There is evidence to prove that large Muslim colonies were established in the South and West coasts of India in the ninth and tenth centuries CE. Sulaiman writes,

...among all the kings there is no one to be found who is so partial to the Arabs as the [prince of] Balhará; and his subjects follow his example.⁴²

Al-Mas'ūdī who came to India in 915 CE, writes that the peace of the Muslims was not disturbed in India and that Islam flourished and it had large mosques. In one town of Saymur, in the kingdom of Balharā, there were as many as 10,000 Muslim traders from Iraq and the Persian Gulf as well as Muslims born in India.⁴³

Al-Istakhrī too says about the land of Balharā,

It is a land of infidels but there are Musalmáns in its cities and none but Musalmáns rule over them... There are Jama' masjids in them.44

Balharā is a corruption of the Sanskrit Vallabha-rājā, the title assumed by the Cālukya-s in the sixth century CE and later on by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa-s (747–973 CE). It is remarkable that none of these early Arab travellers speak about any Indian converts to Islam. The merchant Sulaiman explicitly states that in his time he knew nei-

ther Indians nor Chinese who had accepted Islam or spoke Arabic. 45

The reason for this steadfast adherence of the Indians to their own faith is not far to seek. The early successes of Islam were against religions that had lost their hold on the minds of the people. But in India, the Hindu way of life—symbolised by high moral values of tolerance, truthfulness, and justice—was very much the part and parcel of the vast multitude's mental and material being. Muslims too could not fail to appreciate these values. Al-Idrisi writing in the middle of the twelfth century CE remarks,

The Indians are naturally inclined to justice, and never depart from it in their actions. Their good faith, honesty and fidelity to their engagements are well known, and they are so famous for these qualities that people flock to their country from every side; hence the country is flourishing and their condition prosperous.⁴⁶

These eternal and moral values of life which constitute the core of Hinduism were to sustain it in the next five centuries of Muslim and another two centuries of British rule. The conclusion, therefore, seems inescapable that much of the decline in the social and moral values of Hindu society is the result and not the cause of their foreign subjugation.

No other ancient culture and society of the world has exhibited such remarkable power of sustenance under such adverse circumstances. The political and social organisation of the Hindus was based not on the

46 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 88

⁴² Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 1. London: Trübner and Co., 1867. p. 4

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1]

⁴³ Murūj ad-Dahab wa-Ma'ādin al-Jawhar, Vol. 1, p. 382

Cited by Rafique Ali Jairazbhoy in Foreign Influence in Ancient India (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1963) on p. 168

⁴⁴ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 27

⁴⁵ Cited by Rafique Ali Jairazbhoy in Foreign Influence in Ancient India. New York: Asia Publishing House, 1963. p. 168

individual but on the group. It is through loyalty to these social groups constituted by the joint family, the caste, the village panchayat, the working class guilds and similar other corporations, that Hinduism was to stand "...firm and entire against the onslaughts of alien aggression."

Thus, even when the political system of Hindus collapsed against the Muslims, after a prolonged resistance lasting well over five centuries, the much maligned caste-system, though hopelessly out of date under modern conditions, was to serve as a vehicle of social and economic self-government, unamenable to foreign control, and thus act as a preserver of national life and culture.

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2 Invasion of Sindh by the Arabs

T WAS BUT natural for the Arabs that, inspired by the series of military successes which made them a world power within a generation of the Prophet Muḥammad's death, they should cast their covetous eyes towards India. The first Arab naval expedition which aimed at the conquest of Thāna [Thane] near Bombay was undertaken as early as 636 CE (15 H), during the Caliphate of 'Umar (r. 634-44 CE) but was repulsed. This was followed by two other successive naval expeditions, the first aimed at Barwas [also called Broach or Bharuch] and the second at the port of Debāl [from 'devālaya'] in Sindh [c. 643 CE].²

This naval raid on Debāl is the first Arab attack on Sindh. According to the *Tārikh-i-hind-wa-sind* or *Chach-nāmah*³, the raid ended in failure.

⁴⁷ Mookerji, Radhakumud. Nationalism in Hindu Culture. Delhi: S Chand, 1957. p. 102

¹ The Origins of the Islamic State. Part 2. Tr. Murgotten, Francis Clark. New York: Columbia University, 1924. p. 209 [Translated from the Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhuri. —Editor] [Hereafter referred to as: Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhuri] 2 Ibid.

³ The Chachnamah, An Ancient History of Sind. Tr. Fredunbeg, Mirza Kalichbeg. Karachi: Commissioners Press, 1900 [Translated from the Persian treatise Tārīkh al-hind wa al-sind whose authorship is unknown.—Ed.]
[Hereafter referred to as: The Chachnamah]

Sámah, son of Dewáij, was the ruler of the place, on behalf of Chachrái. When the Arab army arrived at Debal he issued out of the fort and engaged with them in fight

The leader of the Arab army, al-Mughirah was defeated and killed.

The ruler of Sindh during the period of these early Arab raids, according to the author of the Chachnāmah, was the brāhmana Chach Rāi who supplanted the last ruler of the Rāi dynasty, Rāi Sāhasi II [Simhasenal. This is confirmed by Ali Sher "Qaune" Thattyi, the author of Tuhfātu-l Kirām, who says that "... Chach, by his victory over Mahrat, Ráná of Chitor, established himself on the throne about the first year of the Hijra. (i.e., about 622 CE)"5 But Xuanzang6, who visited Sindh about the middle of the seventh century CE, writes that at the time of his visit, Sindh was being ruled by a king of 'Shu-to-lo' race.7 'Shu-to-lo' might be interpreted to mean either a 'kṣatriya' or a 'śūdra'. Since the Chachnāmah described Mahrat, the ruler of Chitor, as a brother of Rāi Sāhasi II8, whom Chach deposed, it may be assumed that rulers of the Rāi dynasty before Chach were kṣatriyas. Elliot is of the opinion that at the time of the early Arab raids, Chach was ruling over Sindh and that "...we should read 'three or five' years as the period that Chach had reigned, when al-Mughirah attacked

The news of Mughairah's defeat at a time when Arab armies were earning victories elsewhere, must have surprised Caliph 'Umar and he decided to send an army by land against Makran (modern Baluchistan), then a part of the Kingdom of Sindh.

The Governor of Iraq, Abū Mūsā, however, advised Caliph 'Umar against undertaking a land attack against Sindh.

...when Abú Músá got the news of Mughairah's defeat and murder, and learnt that in Hind and Sind there was a king who was very headstrong and stiff-necked, and was determined to behave offensively, he sent a communication to that effect to the Commander of the Faithful, 'Umar...urging at the same time that he should think no more of Hind.11

The next Caliph, 'Uthman (r. 644-56 CE), also at first resolved to send Abdullah to invade Sindh. But Ḥākim, whom the Caliph had sent to gather information about Hind and Sindh reported,

Its water is dark (and dirty); its fruit is bitter and poisonous; its land is stony, and its earth is saltish. A small army will soon be annihilated there and a large army will soon die of hunger.12

⁴ Ibid., pp. 57-58

⁵ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 1. London: Trübner and Co., 1867. p. 406

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1]

^{6 [}Often spelt as 'Hiuen Tsang.' Alternative spellings include 'Yuan Chwang' and 'Hsüan-tsang.' -Ed.]

⁷ Foe-Koue-Ki. Ed. Remusat, p. 393

[[]Cited by Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 410, fn. 5 -Ed.]

⁸ The Chachnamah, p. 21

Debal."9 Chach from all accounts, was a vigorous ruler whose kingdom "...extended on the east to the boundary of Kashmir, on the west to Makran, on the south to the coast of the sea and Debal, and on the north to the mountains of Kurdan and Kíkánán."10

⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. pp. 412-13

¹⁰ The Chachnamah, p. 11

¹¹ Ibid., p. 58

¹² Ibid., pp. 59-60

After getting this report, the Caliph gave up the projected invasion of Sindh.

During the Caliphate of 'Alī, in 660 CE, the first Arab expedition by land against Sindh was undertaken under the leadership of Haras [Hāris]. He advanced to Kīkān (Kīkānān) which according to the Chach-nāmah, was included in the central division of Sindh, under the direct administration of the King. Here the people put up a brave resistance and the Muslim army was repulsed with severe losses. Al-Balādhurī informs us,

He (Haras) and those who were with him, saving a few, were slain in the land of Kîkán in the year 42 H. (662 A.D.) Kîkán is in Sind near the frontiers of Khurásán. 13

During the Caliphate of Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān (r. 661-80 CE) the Arabs made as many six determined attempts to conquer Kīkān, the frontier post of Sindh, but all of them were repulsed. To quote an example from the Chach-nāmah,

...Muáwiyeh despatched the expedition of 4.000 men under Abdulláh son of Sawád...

When Abdulláh arrived at Kíkánán, the enemy made an assault on him, but the army of Islám routed them, and secured plenty of booty. The people of Kíkánán assembled in large numbers, and now occupied the mountain passes... the army of Kíkánán made a general assault, by which the army of Islám was ultimately put to flight. The whole mountainous region became alive with fighting men and the Musalmans beat a (hasty) retreat, and came back to Makrán. 14

During this whole period the only permanent gain

of the Arabs was the conquest of Makrān by Sinān ibn Salamah in 668 CE, "...who made his troops take an oath of divorce." But soon after this we hear of Rāshid ibn 'Amr being killed while raiding the Meds [Mīd-s]. al-Mundhir ibn al-Jārūd also died in this region. It was only when Al-Bāhilli ibn al-Harrī was sent by Ziyād, the Governor of Iraq, that Makrān was finally conquered after a fierce campaign in the year 680 CE.

After Caliph Mu'āwiya, the kingdom of Sindh enjoyed a respite from Arab invasion for the next twenty years. But al-Ḥajjāj [ibn Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥakam ibn 'Aqīl al-Thaqafī], who became the Governor of Iraq in 695 CE, renewed the vigorous policy of aggression against India. He first tried to conquer the kingdoms of Kābul [Kapīśa] and Zābul [Jabala] but when his attempts in that direction met with dismal failure, he turned his attention towards Sindh around 708 CE.

In that year, a ship from Ceylon, carrying some Muslim girls born in that country and being sent to al-Ḥajjāj, was captured by some "Meds of Debal." When al-Ḥajjāj demanded from Dāhir [or Dāhar] the release of these women, Dāhir replied, "That is the work of a band of robbers... They do not even care for us." 18

...Hajjáj communicated the whole matter to Khalífah Walíd...and asked his permission to declare a religious war against Hind and Sind, but Walíd hesitated to give permission. Hajjáj then wrote again (showing the necessity of such a step), and eventually the Khalífah gave his permission. 19

¹³ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 116

¹⁴ The Chachnamah, pp. 61-62

¹⁵ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 117

¹⁶ Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhurī, pp. 211-13

¹⁷ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 118

¹⁸ The Chachnamah, p. 71

¹⁹ Ibid.

It is not difficult to understand the grounds of the Caliph's hesitation. As has been presumed by most of the earlier historians, this was not the origin of the hostilities between the Arabs and Sindh. The struggle had been going on for the previous seventy and odd years and Arabs who had been recognised by now as the masters of most of the civilised world, had so long fared disastrously in their attempt to conquer any of the frontier States of India, viz. Kābul, Zābul, and Sindh.

Al-Ḥajjāj, on getting the clearance from the Caliph, dispatched 'Ubayd-ullāh to raid Debāl.

'Ubaidu-llah being killed, Hajjáj wrote to Budail, son of Tahfa, of the tribe of Bajali, who was at 'Umán [Oman], directing him to proceed to Debal.²⁰

Budail [Buzail] travelled by sea and landed on the Sindh coast. After receiving reinforcement of "...a large army" from Muḥammad Hārūn at Nerūn, he proceeded towards Debāl.

The residents of Debal sent a person to Dáhar at Alór [capital of Sindh], informing him of the arrival of Bazíl [Budail] at Nerún, and Dáhar hastened to send his son, Jaisiah with 4,000 soldiers on horses and camels, who came by hurried marches to Debal, and encamped there. Bazíl had already put to flight the warriors of Debal. But now Jaisiah came out with his forces and four elephants to give battle, and commenced fighting with the enemy. A pitched battle ensued which lasted from early morning to the close of the day.²²

In the end, the Muslim army was routed and Budail killed. This crushing defeat of the Arab army must have

made the Caliph crestfallen because when once again al-Ḥajjāj asked for his permission for yet another expedition. The Caliph wrote back,

This affair will be a source of great anxiety, and so we must put it off; for, every time the army goes (on such an expedition) (vast) numbers of Mussalmans are killed. So think no more of such a design. 23

But al-Ḥajjāj was severely afflicted by this disaster and vowed to avenge this indignity of an ignonimous defeat. He now appointed Muḥammad bin Qāsim (styled as Muḥammad bin al-Qāsim Sakifi [or Thaqafi] by al-Balādhurī), his own cousin and son-in-law, to lead a well-organised Arab army against Sindh. "Hajjāj ordered six thousand Syrian warriors to attend Muhammad, and others besides. He was provided with all he could require, without omitting even thread and needles."²⁴

The Chach-nāmah informs us -

Hajjáj wrote a letter directing that 6,000 men out of the descendants of the chiefs of Syria should join him—men who had both their parents living—men who were celebrated, and who were likely—for the sake of their name and fame—to give a good account of themselves when the actual fighting took place, and who were likely to prove loyal to Muhammad Kásim.²⁵

Besides these six thousand picked cavalry, there were "...six thousand armed camel-riders, thoroughly equipped for military operations, with a baggage train of three thousand Bactrian camels... In Makrán, Muhammad Kásim was joined by the Governor, Muhammad

²⁰ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 119

²¹ The Chachnamah, p. 71

²² Ibid., pp. 71–72

²³ Ibid., p. 73

²⁴ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 119

²⁵ The Chachnamah, p. 74

Hárún, with other reinforcements; and five catapults (manjaniks), together with the necessary ammunition. were transported by sea to Debal. The number of men conveyed by the naval squadron may be estimated by the fact, that we find one catapult alone requiring no less than five hundred men to work it. "26

Such was the extent of preparations with which Muhammad bin Qāsim was dispatched to invade Sindh by al-Hajjāj, whose departing words to Muhammad were.

I swear by God that I am determined to spend the wealth of the whole of Irák, that is in my possession, on this expedition, and the flame of my fire will never go down until I take this revenge (of Budail's death), and remove the blot from my name. 27

In spite of all these military preparations, it is extremely doubtful if Sindh could have been conquered by Mohammad bin Qāsim in 712 CE had all the people and chiefs of Sindh remained true to the their king. Curiously enough, it was astrology which made traitors of them. "We have learnt from our science of the stars that the country of Sind will be conquered by the army of Islám, and the infidels will be put to flight."28 - thus spoke the brāhmaṇa who came to Muḥammad bin Qāsim to betray his countrymen at Debāl. He gave out the secret of the red flag flying at the top of the temple. Muḥammad aimed the manjanīk and "...brought down the flagstaff."29 The defenders became dispirited

and the fortress was stormed. At Nerun, the head of the town, Bhandarkan Samani³⁰ not only betrayed his countrymen but also "...supplied him with provisions to such an extent that the soldiers got sufficient com for their needs."31

At Sīwistān32, when the cousin of the king Dāhir [or Dāhar Chach], Bachehrā, insisted on fighting, the Samani party sent a message to Muḥammad,

All the people, whether agriculturists, artisans, merchants or other common folk, have left Bachehrá's side and Bachehrá has not sufficient men and materials of war, and can never stand against you in an open field, or in a struggle with you.33

At Jortah, Prince Mokah also surrendered to Muḥammad and helped him with boats to cross the river Indus. Amidst all these desertions, the character of, and resistance offered by King Dāhir, his queens Rāṇī

²⁶ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. pp. 434-35

²⁷ The Chachnamah, p. 75

²⁸ Ibid., p. 81

²⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 120 (Quoting al-Balādhuri)

^{30 [&#}x27;Bhandarkan' is his name and 'Samani' refers to Buddhist priest or monk (or the name of the clan or tribe). See The Chachnamah, p. 92 fn. - Ed.]

³¹ The Chachnamah, p. 92

^{32 [}Other names include Seistān, Sijistān, and Sistān, all of which come from the Sanskrit 'Saka-sthāna.' - Ed.]

³³ The Chachnamah, p. 94

[[]Prior to this, the Samani party writes a letter to Bachehrā - "We people are a priestly class (Násiks), our religion is peace and our creed is good will (to all). According to our faith, fighting and slaughtering are not allowable. We will never be in favour of shedding blood... We have come to know that Amír Hajjáj has, under the order of Khalifah, instructed them to grant pardon to those who ask for it. So when an opportunity offers...we shall enter into a solemn treaty and binding covenant with them. The Arabs are said to be faithful* to their word." (Ibid., p. 93) -Ed.

^{*}According to the Tuhfatulkurám, this message to Bachehrá was sent by the Samani at the suggestion of Muhammad Kásim.]

Bāī and Lādī, and his son Prince Jaisiah stands out in marked contrast. Undaunted by reverses, Dāhir wrote to Muḥammad –

Be it known to you that the fortified town of Debal, which you have taken is an insignificant town, where only traders and artisans reside... If I had sent against you Rái Jaisiah who is the most victorious of all the rulers on the face of the earth, and who can wreak vengeance on the strongest men of his age, or the king of Kashmír who is the mighty possessor of a crown...who sways the whole of Hind and even the country of Makrán and Turán...if I had sent these heroes against you, you could not have done the slightest harm to them and no army would have dared to pass through the remotest limits of this country...³⁴

When intelligence reached Dāhir that Muḥammad has reached a place [i.e. Jewar] near the fortress of Raor [Nawabshah, Pakistan], Dāhir is said to have exclaimed, "...it is a place where his bones shall lie." 35

When his wazir [minister] suggested to Dāhir to take away his followers and property to other parts of Hind, Dāhir replied,

My plan is to meet the Arabs in open battle, and fight with them with all possible vigour. If I overpower them, I shall crush them to death and my kingdom will then be put on a firm footing. But if I am killed honourably, the event will be recorded in the books of Arabia and Hind, and will be talked of by great men, and will be heard by other kings in the world, and it will be said that such and such a king sacrificed his precious life for the sake of his country, in fighting with the enemy. 36

36 The Chachnamah, p. 123

From all accounts, the fight between Dāhir and Muḥammad was fierce and lasted for several days; al-Balādhurī says, "...A dreadful conflict ensued, such as had never been heard of." The Chach-nāmah informs us that on the second day, the Muslim army was nearly routed, "...the infidels made a rush on the Arabs from all sides, and fought so steadily and bravely that the army of Islám became irresolute, and their lines were broken up in great confusion." 38

But as it happened to so many other Indian kings, Dāhir seated on an elephant, became an easy target and an arrow struck him in the chest. The king was killed and the army routed but prince Jaisiah and the queen Rāṇi Bāi resolved to defend the fortress of Raor. Jaisiah was persuaded by the wazīr Sīsākar to go the fort of Brahmanābād and defend the rest of his dominions with the help of "...brave warrior and subjects." 39

The queen, however, "...together with some of the generals, prepared for battle. She reviewed the army in the fort and fifteen thousand warriors were counted. They had all resolved to die."40

Reduced to extremity, the queen along with other ladies committed jauhar. 41 Jaisiah tried to organise the

³⁴ Ibid., p. 87

³⁵ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 169 (Quoting the Chach-nāmah)

³⁷ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 121 (Quoting al-Baladhurī)

³⁸ The Chachnamah, p. 142

³⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 171

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 172

^{41 [}Muḥammad bin Qāsim launched a two-pronged attack on the fort where the queen was hiding. Realising that all was lost, the queen assembled all the womenfolk and said, "Jaisiya is separated from us, and Muhammad Kásım is come. God forbid that we should owe our liberty to these outcast cow-eaters! Our honour would be lost! Our respite is at an end, and there is nowhere any hope of escape; let us collect wood, cotton, and oil, for I think that we should burn ourselves and go to meet our husbands. If any wish to save herself she may." See Ibid.—Ed.]

resistance from his stronghold of Brahmanābād. He wrote to all the chiefs of the remaining forts to hold on. He organised raids to cut off the supplies of the Arab army and even wrote a letter to the Rāṇā of Kāśmīr appealing for help. It was only after a brave resistance lasting six months that the fort of Brahmanābād could be taken. Lādī, another queen of Dāhir, "...brought out all her wealth and treasures, and distributing them among the warriors of the army, she thus encouraged her brave soldiers while the fight was carried on at one of the gates."

However, in the midst of betrayals and desertions (Wazīr Sīsākar having already joined the Arabs), the unequal conflict could not last long and by 713 CE the whole of Sindh including Mūltān, had for the first time passed into the hands of the Muslims.

But the victories of Muḥammad bin Qāsim, though brilliant in execution, failed to make any impression on the other contemporary Indian kings, the Chach-nāmah informs us that on reaching Udhāpur, Muḥammad Qāsim sent an envoy to Rāi Harcandar, the king of Kanauj [Kānyakubja], with the message —

From the sea to the limits of Kashmir, every king and every prince has come under the sway of Islám. Amír Imáddudín (Muhammad Kásim) is the commander-in-chief of the Arab army and he is the most powerful conqueror of infidels.⁴⁴

Rāi Harcandar told the envoy,

This kingdom has remained in our possession for nearly 1,600 years; and during our rule no enemy has ever

dared to set foot within our territories with offensive intentions or to stretch his hand to dispossess us of any part of our country. What fear have we of your absurd vapourings? It is improper and against the rules of etiquette to imprison an envoy or to put him in chains; or else, for this nonsensical talk and absurd boast of yours, I would have made an example of you to serve as a warning to other enemies of kings. Now go back to your amír and tell him that we must meet once and measure each other's strength and prowess. Then, either we shall overpower you or be overpowered. When the strength and bravery of both sides is put to the test on the field of battle, we shall decide whether to make peace or to carry on war. 45

But before a trial of strength between the Arabs and powerful neighbouring Indian kings of Kāśmīr or Kanauj⁴⁶ could materialise, Muḥammad bin Qāsim was recalled to Iraq by orders of the new Caliph, Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik, who bore a grudge against al-Ḥajjāj and his relations. The statement of al-Balādhurī that that Muḥammad bin Qāsim was imprisoned and tortured to death is to be preferred to that of the romantic story about King Dāhir's daughters, related by the

⁴² Ibid., p. 178

⁴³ Ibid., p. 181

⁴⁴ The Chachnamah, pp. 192-93

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 193

⁴⁶ Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi in his Arab aur Bhārat ke Sambandh (Allahabad: The Hindustani Academy, 1929. pp. 322–23) has claimed that besides Kanauj on the river Gangā, there was another Qanauj near to, and a dependency of Multan but Hem Chandra Ray dismisses the theory of 'a second Kanauj.' (The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol. 1. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1931. p. 4, fn. 3) Rama Shankar Tripathi writes in his History of Kanauj to the Moslem Conquest (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1959. p. 192) that Cunningham on the basis of Abu'l-Fazl's Äyin-i-Akbarī (Vol. 2, p. 219) asserted that Harcand, the contemporary of Muḥammad bin Qāsim, ascended the throne of Kanauj in 715 CE, and that makes him "...almost the immediate predecessor of Yaśovarman."

Chach-nāmah and copied by Mīr Ma'sūm Shah in his Tārīkh-i Ma'sūmī.47

Immediately after the recall of Muhammad bin Oa. sim in 715 CE, there was a revival of Hindu power in Sindh. Al-Balādhurī tells us.

The kings of al-Hind had come back to their kingdoms. and Dâhir's son, Hullîshah (the equivalent of prince Jaisiah), had come back to Brahmanâbâdh. Habîb stationed himself upon the banks of the Mihrân.48

Tārīkh-i Ma'sūmī further informs us that within two years of the death of Muhammad bin Qasim "...the people of India rebelled, and threw off their yoke, and the country from Debalpur to the Salt Sea only remained under the dominions of the Khalif [sic]."49

The Caliphs continued to send Governors over Sindh and there is enough evidence to show that some of these Governors tried to extend the sphere of their influence beyond their strongholds of Sindh. Even Muhammad bin Qāsim had been ordered by al-Ḥajjāj not to rest content with the conquest of Sindh but to penetrate to China, thus emulating the achievements of Kutaiba [Abū Hafs Qutayba ibn Abī Ṣālih] in Transoxiana [Mā Warā' an-Nahr in Arab sources].50

The forward policy of the Arabs was pursued vigorously by Junaid [Junayd bin 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Murri], the Governor of Sindh under Caliph Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik (r. 724-43 CE). According to al-Balādhurī, Hullishah [i.e. Jaisiah] and all other rulers of Sindh had accepted Islam in the reign of Caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd

al-'Azīz around 718 CE.51 But Dāhir's son Jaisiah apostatized and opposed the advance of Junaid into Sindh in a naval battle. Jaisiah was, however, defeated and killed. After conquering al-Kirāj [Kutch], Junaid sent his officers to Marmad, Mandal, Dahnaj, and Barwas [Broach or Bharuch]. He also sent armies against Uzain and the country of Māliba. He also conquered al-'Bailamān and Jurz [Gurjara-pradeśa].52 Most of these places can be easily identified. According to R C Majumdar, "Marmad evidently stands for Maru-Māra, corresponding to Jaisalmer and part of Jodhpur."53 Mandal according to him is probably Mandor [Mandavyapura], while al-Bailaman refers to the circle of States mentioned in a Ghatiyala inscription as Valla-mandala, comprising regions including parts of Rajputana, Malwa, and Gujarat.54 Māliba and Uzain stand for Malwa [Mālvā] and its capital city Ujjain [Ujjayinī].55

From al-Baladhuri's account it seems that the Arabs advanced through Rajputana and reached Ujjain in the east and Bharuch in the south. But the success of Arab armies was short lived. Their advance in the south was signally checked by the Cālukya ruler of Lāṭa (Southern Gujarat), Pulakeśin Avani-janāśraya. The Navsāri inscription [738 CE] records that Pulakeśin defeated a Tājika (Arab) army, which had defeated the kingdoms of Sindhū, Kaccha [Kutch], Saurāṣṭra [Gujarat], Cāvoṭaka, Maurya, and Gurjara and advanced as far south as

⁴⁷ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. pp. 437-38

⁴⁸ Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhuri, p. 225

⁴⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 438

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 434

⁵¹ Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhurī, p. 225

⁵² Ibid., pp. 226-27

⁵³ Majumdar, R C. The Classical Age. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 3). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1954. p. 172

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 154, 172

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 172

Navsāri, where this prince was ruling at this time. The prince's heroic victory earned him the titles "...Daksina. patha-svādhāraņa or "Solid Pillar of Dakṣiṇāpatha or the Dekkan" and Anivartaka-nivartayitr or "Repeller of the unrepellable"."56

The Gwalior inscription of the Gurjara-Pratihāra king Bhoja I, tells us that Nāga-bhaṭa I, the founder of the family who ruled in Avanti around 725 CE, defeated the army of a powerful mleccha [foreign] ruler, who invaded his dominions.57

The attempts of the Arabs to advance northwards were stemmed by the renowned king of Kāśmīr, Lalitāditya Mukta-pīḍa (r. 724-60 cE). While the Shāhi rule in Kābul and Zābul was exposed to the Arab attacks, Lalitāditya found an opportunity to extend his kingdom beyond the Indus. He led a victorious army through the Dārada-deśa (Dardistan) to the Tuḥkhārā country⁵⁸ (Tukharistan is the ancient name of one of the districts of Balkh, Afghanistan). R C Majumdar suggests that Mummuni, referred to by Kalhana59 and whom Lalitaditya is said to have defeated thrice, refers to the Arab ruler. (Ma'mūn was a popular name among Arabs and we hear from al-Baladhuri of one al-Ma'mun ibn ar-Rashid as Governor of Khurāsān [Khorāsān] from 808 to 818 CE).

Al-Balādhurī mentions al-Kirāj as one of the conquests of Junaid. If al-Kirāj is Kangra⁶⁰, it is very likely that Lalitaditya defeated the Arabs here and freed punjab from their depredations.61 Lalitāditya seems to have looked at things from a wider perspective. In alliance with Yasovarman, he even sent embassies to the Imperial Court of China.62 The mission was received with honour, but no military assistance was received from China. But even unaided, Lalitāditya succeeded in defeating the Kāmbhoja-s, Tuḥkārā-s [Turks], Dārada-s [Dards], and Bhautta-s [Tibetans], who surrounded the kingdom of Kāśmīr.63 He is said to have ordered the Turuşka-s to shave off half of their heads as a symbol of their submission.64

Confirmation of this view may further be had from the Travels of Ou-Kông [Wu-kong], according to which Mung-ti (Muktapida) was in alliance with the ruler of Central India (Yaśovarman) and together they blocked "the five passes" leading from Tibet. 65

Thus there is definite evidence that there was no dearth of desire on the part of the Arabs to extend their

⁵⁶ Bhandarkar, Devadatta Ramakrishna. 'Slow Progress of Islam Power in Ancient India.' Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Vol. 10, No. 1/2. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1929, p. 31

⁵⁷ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 18 (1925-26) Ed. Sastri, H Krishna and Sastri, Hirananda. Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch. p. 107

⁵⁸ Rāja-tarangini of Kalhana, 4.163, 166 [In other words, chapter (taraiga - lit. 'wave') 4 and verses (slokas) 163 and 166 -Ed.] 59 [Ibid., 4.167 -Ed.]

⁶⁰ On p. 218 of the History of Kanauj to the Moslem Conquest (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1937), Rama Shankar Tripathi writes, "The Kiras occupied territory in the Kangra valley, where their name is preserved in Kiragrama, the village in which their famous temple of Vaidyanatha stood." (Śwa Purana, cited in Archaeological Survey India Reports, Vol. 5, pp. 178-80)

⁶¹ Majumdar, R C. The Classical Age. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 3). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R.C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1954. p. 135

⁶² Chavannes, Tou-kiue, pp. 166-68, 209 [Cited in Ibid., p. 133 —Ed.]

⁶³ Rāja-tarangini of Kalhana, 4.163-68

⁶⁴ Ibid., 4,179

⁶⁵ Tripathi, Rama Shankar. History of Kanauj to the Moslem Conquest. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1937. p. 203

dominions into the interior of India. But the Gurjara-Pratihāra-s of the west, styled as the 'Kings of Jurz' by the Arab chroniclers, stood as bulwarks of Indian defence against the Arab inroads. No wonder then that the Arab travellers speak of the king of Jurz in these words -

Among the princes of India there is no greater foe of the Muhammadan faith than he.66

Hemmed in from all sides by powerful Indian onposition, the Arabs in Sindh were soon driven to a defensive posture. Al-Baladhuri writes that in the times of Tamim ibn Zaid al 'Utbi, the successor of Junaid, "...the Musulmáns retired from several parts of India and left some of their positions, nor have they up to the present time advanced so far as in days gone by."67

The Arabs had to abandon their concept of holy war against the Indians and enter into alliances with infidels for their own protection. The Balharā-s of Mankir (Rāstrakūta-s of Mānyakheta) came to be considered as friendly to the Arabs because the former were unfriendly towards the Guriara-Pratihara-s. The merchant Sulaiman [Sulaymān al-Tājir] writes in 851 CE, about this friendship of the Arabs towards the Rästrakūta-s.

In fact, among all the kings there is no one to be found who is so partial to the Arabs as the Balhará; and his subjects follow his example, 68

But in spite of these alliances the power of the Arabs in Sindh continued to decline. Al-Baladhuri tells us that in the times of Hakim [al-Hakam ibn 'Awana], who succeeded Tamim as Governor of Sindh.

...while al-Ḥakam ibn-'Awanah al-Kalbi was ruler, the people of al-Hind apostatized, with the exception of the inhabitants of Kassah. A place of refuge to which the Moslems might flee was not to be found, so he built on the further side of lake (al-Buhairah), where it borders on al-Hind, a city which he named al-Mahfûthah, establishing it as a place of refuge for them, where they should be secure and making it a capital. 69

Another city that was built at this time was al-Mansūrah ['the victorious']70 and from al-Balādhurī's account it appears that all other portions of Sindh were practically lost to the Arabs.

Hākim, however, "...won back from the hands of the enemy all they had conquered from him... Al-Hakam was killed there later, and afterwards the governors kept fighting the enemy and seizing whatever came into their hands, and subduing the neighbourhood whose inhabitants rebelled."71

This is a graphic description of the tenuous hold of the Arabs over a limited portion of Sindh in the eighth century CE. The only other Arab Governor credited with any major success in Sindh is Hisham, appointed by the Abbāsīd Caliph, Abū Ja'far 'Abd-allāh al-Manṣūr (r. 754-75 CE). Hisham is stated to have reconquered Mültän.

With the rapid decline of the power of the Abbasid Caliphs in the ninth and tenth centuries CE, and their

⁶⁶ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 4

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 126 (Quoting al-Baladhuri)

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 4

⁶⁹ Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhuri, pp. 228-29

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 229 71 Ibid.

inability to support their distant Viceroys with men and money, the Arab control over Sindh further weakened. The accounts of Arab travellers in India of the tenth century CE viz., Abu'l-Qasim Ubaydallāh ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Khordadbeh [ibn Khurdadbih] (912 CE), 'Abū al-Hasan 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī al-Mas'ūdī (915 CE). Abū Ishāq Ibrāhîm bin Muḥammad al-Fārsī al-Istakhrī (951 CE) and Muḥammad Abū'l-Qāsim ibn Ḥawqal [ibn Haukal] (976 CE) - all speak of only two independent Arab principalities with Mültān and Mansūrah as their capitals. Al-Mas'ūdī describes Mūltān as "...one of the strongest frontier places of the Musalmans, and around it there are one hundred and twenty thousand towns and villages."72

Al-Mas'ūdī gives us interesting details about the famous idol of the city of Multan. He says,

When the unbelievers march against Múltán, and the faithful do not feel themselves strong enough to oppose them, they threaten to break their idol, and their enemies immediately withdraw.73

Among these enemies of Islam, the foremost according to al-Mas'ūdī, was the Baurah (Pratihāra) king of Kanauj. A century earlier, the merchant Sulaiman had listed them [Gurjara-Pratihāra-s] as the greatest foes of Islam. In the beginning of the tenth century CE, their power extended over a large part of North India and their 'army of the north' according to al-Mas'ūdī, waged constant war "...against the Arab prince of Múltán, and with the Musulmans, his subjects on the frontier."74

But for this temple of Mültän, perhaps the Arab principality of Multan would have fallen a victim to the mighty army of the Gurjara-Pratihāra-s. Al-Iṣṭakhrī, writing about 951 CE, expresses similar sentiments -

Multán is a city about half the size of Mansúra. There is an idol there held in great veneration by the Hindus, and every year people from the most distant parts undertake pilgrimages to it, and bring to it vast sums of money, which they expend upon the temple and on those who lead there a life of devotion... When the Indians make war upon them and endeavour to seize the idol, the inhabitants bring it out, pretending that they will break it and burn it. Upon this the Indians retire, otherwise they would destroy Multán.75

The same precarious condition of the Arab hold over Multan continued right up to the middle of tenth century CE, when Mültän was occupied by the Qarmatians [Qarāmiṭah-s], who in their turn were vanquished by Mahmud of Ghazni in the beginning of eleventh century CE.

Thus after three centuries of unremitting efforts, we find the Arab dominion in India limited to the two petty States of Mültän and Mansürah. And here too, they could exist only after renouncing their iconoclastic zeal and utilizing the idols for their own political ends. It is very strange sight to see them seeking shelter behind the very budds [mūrtis] they came here to destroy.76

⁷² Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 23

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 27-28

^{76 [}Sita Ram Goel writes, "It has to be kept in mind all along that the Arab empire in this period was the mightiest power on earth. Compared to this monolithic and highly militarised giant, the Hindu principalities of Sindh and other border areas were no better than pygmies. Yet the pygmies had the last laugh at the end of the 10th century when the Islamised Turks took over from the Arabs

The Arab conquest of Sindh has been described by Wolseley Haig as -

It was a mere episode in the history of India and affected only a small portion of the fringe of that vast country...
The tide of Islam, having overflowed Sind and the lower Punjab, ebbed, leaving some jetsam on the strand.

From a political or missionary point of view, the Arab conquest of Sindh was certainly a minor affair. The Arab conquest of other countries, outside India had been followed by wholesale conversions and supplanting of local institutions by Islamic ones. But as William Muir points out,78 the conquest of Sindh marks a new stage in Muhammadan policy. The Islamic law had divided unbelievers into two classess viz., the 'People of the Book ('Ahl al-Kitāb)'—the possessors of scriptures, i.e. the Jews and the Christians—and the 'Idolators.' The former were not to be lawfully molested in any way, so long as they accepted the rule of the conquerors and paid the jizyah. But for the idolators, the choice was only between Islam and death. In Central Asia, the idolators had been rooted out. But this experiment failed in Sindh as Islam was confronted with a faith which though idolatorous, defied death and looked at life in this world as one link in the eternal chain of births and deaths.

The experiment was only tried at Debāl, where "...

the temples were demolished, and mosques founded; a general massacre endured for three whole days; prisoners were taken captive; plunder was amassed." But the Arabs soon realised the senselessness of the cold blooded massacre. Al-Ḥajjāj informed Muḥammad bin Qāsim ed massacre. Al-Ḥajjāj informed Muḥammad bin Qāsim that the temples were to be treated like "...churches of the Christians, or synagogues of the Jews." Al-Ḥajjāj's orders to Muḥammad bin Qāsim were —

Permission is given them to worship their gods. Nobody must be forbidden or prevented from following his own religion.⁸¹

Again,

When you have conquered the country and strengthened the forts, endeavour to console the subjects and to soothe the residents...⁸²

Thus under compulsion of events, the stern code of Muslim law relaxed, the Hindus were allowed to rebuild their temples and perform their worship, and the three percent, which had been allowed to the priest under the former government was not discontinued.⁸³

the Islamic crusade against "Sind and Hind". It was the old story of Alexander and the small republics of the Punjab and Sindh, all over again." – p. 13 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) —Ed.]

⁷⁷ The Cambridge History of India. Vol. 3. Ed. Haig, Wolseley. Cambridge: University Press, 1928. p. 10

⁷⁸ Cited in Ibid., p. 3

⁷⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 469

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 186

⁸² The Chachnamah, p. 90

^{83 [}Sita Ram Goel makes a pertinent observation here. He writes, "Many historians, particularly the apologists for Islam, have presented this expediency as a proof of Islamic liberalism under the early Arabs. They have contrasted this Arab "liberalism" with the "fanaticism" of the Turks who joined the fold of Islam at a later stage. Dr. Misra does not make this mistake. He has laid bare the true motivation at the back of this "liberalism", and thus restored the perspective on the plasticity of Islamic polity in the over-all framework of the fundamental Islamic law regarding treatment of non-believers. The mullahs and sufis of Islam might have howled

"Dáhir's prime minister was also retained in office, in order to protect the rights of the people and to main, tain the native institutions..."

Thus the political and cultural resistance encountered by the Arabs in Sindh stands out in sharp contrast to anything of its kind faced by them anywhere else in the world. Soon after securing foothold in Sindh, after almost relentless efforts lasting more than seventy years, the invaders were driven to the defensive. Culturally too, an entirely new chapter was opened in the Islamic treatment of the subject races. As [Gustav] Weil remarks,

It no longer was a holy war—with the view, that is to say, of the conversion of the heathen. That object was now dropped. Side by side with Allah, idols might be worshipped, if only tribute were duly paid. 85



over this dilution of the dogma. But the military and political leaders always knew when and where to make a compromise in the interests of self-preservation, and till the next stage of aggrandisement arrived in the vicissitudes of war. Lenin has also exhorted

the party to know exactly when to practise tactics of retreat. Islam, after all, is Communism plus Allah, as Allami Iqbal has observed so aptly." – p. 14 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders

⁽New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) —Ed.] 84 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1. p. 469

⁸⁵ Cited by Sir William Muir in The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1915) on p. 355

3

The Heroic Defence of Kābul and Zābul

HE VALIANT NATURE of the prolonged resistance offered by the tiny States of Kābul and Zābul against the early Muslim invaders has not been duly appreciated by the historians. They defied the Arabs—the conquerors of the world—for over two centuries. For another one and three-quarters of a century, their ruling dynasty of the Shāhi-s guarded the northwestern gates of India against the Turkish hordes.

There were three Hindu kingdoms on the north-western borderland of India in the seventh century CE, when the Arabs embarked on a career of world conquest. These were the kingdoms of Sindh, Kābul or Kiapi-shi [Kapīśa], and Zābul [Jabala] or Zābulistān. On account of their geographical situation, they were the first to face the brunt of the Arab aggression. The kingdom of Kābul was situated in, and comprised the valley of the river Kābul (Kubha) and extended as far north as the Hindukush (*Upari-syena*) mountains. A Hindu dynasty known as Shāhi (Turki-Shāhi) held sway over

¹ Srivastava, A L. 'Hindu Kings of Afghanistan.' Uttara Bharti. Vol.

⁴ No. 2. 1958. p. 1

this region from about as far back as the fourth century CE. Hari-sena, in his Allāhābād praśasti² of the Gupta emperor Samudra-gupta (335–75 CE), refers to these rulers by the phrase – 'Daivaputra ṣāhi-ṣāhānuṣāhi-śaka-muruṇḍaiḥ.'

In 630 CE, the Chinese pilgrim, Xuanzang found an able king of the kṣatriya varṇa ruling over this ex. tensive kingdom which was more than 4,000 li [666 miles] in circuit3, and included in the east - Laghman (Lamghan), Jalalabad (Nagarhara), Peshawar [Puruṣapura], Charsadda [Puṣkalāvatī], and Und on the Indus; in the south, the territory on both banks of the river Gomal [Gomati] and the principality of Ghazna (Hosina). In the north, it touched Kāśmir and in the west, Persia. Xuanzang's contemporary on the throne of Kābul was powerful enough to bring under his control ten independent principalities. The kṣatriya king belonged to a dynasty founded by Barha-tigin. Scholars have presumed that the kingdom of Kapiśi was "... the rump of the once mighty Kuṣān empire."4 Yueh-chi [Yuezhi] hordes were gradually assimilated in the Hindu fold. Al-Birūni's account supports the assumption that the 'Shāhya-s of Kābul' were originally the Little Yueh-chi rulers. He says,

The Hindus had kings residing in Kâbul, Turks who were said to be of Tibetan origin. The first of them, Barhatakîn, came into the country and entered a cave in Kâbul, which none could enter except by creeping on hands and knees...

...he brought those countries under his sway and ruled them under the title of a shahiya of Kabul. The rule remained among his descendants for generations, the number of which is said to be about sixty.⁵

Further,

One of this series of kings was Kanik [perhaps Kaniṣka], the same who is said to have built the vihâra (Buddhistic monastery) of Purushâvar [Peshawar].

The kingdom of Zābul (Jabala) lay south of that of Kābul and just north of modern Balochistan (Gedrosia), comprising the upper valley of the Helmand river. Seistān⁷ with its capital Zarang [Zaranj], which lay on the lake Zarah, formed a part of this kingdom. Its king was also Hindu and bore the title of 'Shāh' or 'Shāhya.' "In the seventh century A.D. these two kingdoms formed parts of India both politically and culturally, being Indian in language, literature and religion and ruled over by kings who bore Indian names."

² Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and their Successors. 'Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum' (Vol. 3). Ed. Fleet, John Faithfull. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1888. p. 8

³ Watters, Thomas. On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India. 'Oriental Translation Fund New Series' (Vol. 14). Eds. Davids, T W Rhys and Bushell, S W. London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1904. pp. 122–23

⁴ Stein, Marc Aurel. Zur Geschichte der Sahis von Kabul. Stuttgart: Festgruss an Rudolf von Roth zum Doctor-Jubildum, 1893. p. 197 Cited by Hem Chandra Ray in The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol. 1 (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1931) on p. 61 in fn. 3

⁵ Sachau, Edward C. Alberuni's India. Vol. 2. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1910. p. 10 [Translation of the Kitāb al-Hind of al-Birūnī. — Ed.]

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Alberuni's India, Vol. 2]

⁶ Ibid., p. 11

^{7 [}Other names include Siwistan, Sijistān, and Sistān, all of which come from the Sanskrit 'Śaka sthāna.' — Ed.]

⁸ Majumdar, R C. The Classical Age. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 3). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1954. p. 165

After the conquest of Persia by the Arabs in 643 CE the western frontiers of the Caliphate touched the Hin. du kingdoms of Kābul and Zābul, which constituted 'the borders of India.'9 Fired by the zeal for world conquest and uprooting idolatory, the Arabs launched a determined attack to conquer the Kābul valley in 650 CE. 'Abdallāh ibn 'Āmir, Governor of Baṣra, directed ar-Rabī' ibn Ziyād to subdue Seistān, a province of the Hindu kingdom. Ar-Rabī' appeared before Zarang, the capital of Seistan. He was met with a fierce resistance and many Arabs lost their lives. But ar-Rabi' was successful in ultimately defeating the 'Satrap'10 or Governor of Seistān and proceeded as far as Būst [Laṣkargāh]. But soon he was driven out of Seistan, losing everything he had gained.11 Al-Baladhuri does not inform us the name of the overlord of this Satrap but his subsequent account confirms that he ruled on behalf of the line of Indian kings of Kābul and Zābul known to the Arabs as Rutbīl or Rantbīl.12 Henceforth, we shall refer to him as 'Ranbal,' the most common epithet used for him. 9 Hitti, Philip K. History of the Arabs. Third edition. London: Mac-

In 653 CE, 'Abdallāh ibn 'Āmir entrusted 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Samurah ibn Ḥabīb with the task of conquering Seistan and Kabul. Tarjuma-i Futuhat [Kitab al-Futuh] of Ahmad ibn A'tham al-Kūfī has the following account of the conquest of Seistan -

'Abdu-r Rahmán led his forces to Zaranj. The people of the city offered battle, and a fierce fight ensued between the opposing parties. The city was taken and the Musalmáns obtained great spoil, carrying off many captives from Sijistán, and incalculable wealth...13

Al-Balādhurī further informs us that 'Abdul Rahmān

...went into the temple of Zûr, an idol of gold with two rubies for eyes, and cut off a hand and took out the rubies. Then he said to the satrap, "Keep the gold and gems. I only wanted to show you that it had no power to harm or help. "14

In the reign of Caliph Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān (r. 661-680 CE), 'Abdul Rahmān was again appointed Governor of Seistan and entrusted with the task of conquering Kābul. Al-Balādhurī informs us that after a month's siege 'Abdul Rahmān obtained possession of Kābul. But.

The king of Kábul made an appeal to the warriors of India, and the Musulmáns were driven out of Kábul. He recovered all other countries and advanced as far as Bust... 15

millan and Co., 1946. p. 157

^{10 [}Satraps were Governors or Viceroys of provinces of the Median and Achaemenid Empires as well as the Sāsanian and Hellenistic empires. The word satrap, derived via the Latin satrapes from the Greek satrápēs, is cognate with the Sanskrit ksatrapah —Ed.]

¹¹ The Origins of the Islamic State. Part 2. Tr. Murgotten, Francis Clark. New York: Columbia University, 1924. pp. 141-43 [Translation of the Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhurī. —Ed.]

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhurī]

¹² Ray, Hem Chandra. The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol.

^{1.} New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1931. p. 65

Based on Islamic sources, it is variously spelt as Ranbal, Rantal, Rantbil, Ratbal, Ratbil, Rutbil, Zambil, Zantil, Zunbil, etc. It could be a corruption of the word 'Ratna-pala,' lit. 'protector of jewels' or it could be the word 'Rana-bala,' lit. 'strong in battle.' —Ed.]

¹³ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 2. London: Trübner and Co., 1869. p. 414, fn. 1

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2] 14 Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhurī, p. 144

¹⁵ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 415

However, the ruler of Kābul agreed to pay an an nual tribute to keep the invaders away from his territories. But whenever the opportunity offered, the tribute was withheld. In 683 CE, Yazīd ibn Ziyād ibn Abīhi, the Governor of Seistān, who attempted retribution was defeated and killed in the Battle of Junzah and his army was put to flight with great slaughter. Seistān was also lost to the Arabs and the Arabs had to pay 5,00,000 dirhams to the Hindu king, Ranbal, to get the release of Abū 'Ubayda. But soon after, Ranbal was killed by 'Umair al-Māzini. But the war with the Arabs was continued by his son, who also ruled with the title of Ranbal.

In 692 CE 'Abd-ullāh was appointed by the Caliph, 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, as the new Governor of Seistān. 'Abd-ullāh resumed the fighting.

Ratbil did not oppose his advance into the land until he had penetrated deep into it, when he seized the mountain paths and passes against him, asking the Moslems to cease hostilities and offering to refrain from despoiling them. This was refused, and Ratbil said, "Well then, take 300,000 dirhams for a treaty, and put it in writing, agreeing not to raid our land while you are wâlt, nor to burn nor lay waste." 'Abdallâh did this, and when 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwân [the Caliph] learned of it, he dismissed him ['Abd-ullāh]. 17

During al-Ḥajjāj's Governorship of Iraq, 'Ubaydullāh ibn Abi Bakrah was sent to Seistān.

Hajjáj desired him not to linger in Sístán, but to march without delay towards Kábul to enforce the payment of

the tribute from Ranbal, to which the chief had agreed; and ordered him peremptorily not to return until he had subjugated the whole province. 18

'Ubayd-ullāh advanced to the neighbourhood of Kābul but here his passage was blocked by Ranbal's forces and he had to retreat leaving his three sons as hostages [in addition to paying 5,00,000 dirhams,] and promising that he shall not fight as long as he was Governor. The terms of the treaty were not accepted by the other Arab Captains and one of them, Shuraiḥ ibn-Hāni al-Ḥārithi "...made a charge, but was killed. The army fought their way out, although hard pressed, and made their way along the desert of Būst. Many of them perished of thirst and hunger, and 'Ubaidallâh died of grief for what he had brought upon his men and the fate that had overtaken them." 20

To wipe out the disgrace of this humilitating defeat, al-Ḥajjāj raised a very powerful force and in 700 CE 'Abd-ar Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ash'ath was dispatched as "...the head of forty thousand men into Sístán, and having here united to his own troops the troops of the province, marched without delay against the princes of Kábul. 'Abd-ar Raḥmān resturned to Sístán laden with booty, but incurred the displeasure of Hajjáj by not remaining to secure his conquest. Exasperated by a threat of supersession, he determined to carry his arms against his master..."

'Abd-ar Raḥmān entered into a treaty with Ranbal, which stipulated that if the former was successful

¹⁶ Ray, Hem Chandra. The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol.

^{1.} New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1931. p. 67

¹⁷ Kitäb Futüh al-Buldan of al-Baladhuri, p. 150

¹⁸ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 416

¹⁹ Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhurī, p. 151

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 416

against al-Ḥajjāj, "Ranbal should be absolved from ey, ery species of tribute, provided the latter should agree to afford him an asylum in the event of failure. After many vicissitudes of fortune, 'Abd-ar Rahman was at last compelled to seek the protection of his ally, who after treating him for some time with kindness and hos. pitality, was at last seduced by the promises or by the threats of Hajjáj to deliver up his guest."22 However. 'Abd-ar Rahman committed suicide by throwing himself down the hill.

This valiant resistance put up by Ranbal against the mightiest forces of the Caliphate made his name famous throughout Central Asia and "...he is the hero of many Arab stories of the holy wars on the frontiers of Hind,"23

Mas'údí, in his chapter in the Murúj...makes mention of a prince [Ranbal] in the valley of the Indus, and who after having subjugated Eastern Persia, advanced to the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. 24

Al-Balādhurī informs us that after the disaster of 'Abd-ar Raḥmān's expedition, al-Ḥajjāj made peace with Ranbal agreeing not to make war upon him for seven or nine years on condition that he paid 9,00,000 dirhams in kind every year. In the reign of Caliph Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik (r. 715-17 CE), he ceased to pay any tribute at all. In the reign of Abbāsīd Caliph Abū Ja'far 'Abd-allāh al-Manṣūr (r. 754-75 CE), once again attempts were made to compel Ranbal to pay regular tributes but the attempts were only partially successful.

As al-Balādhurī tells us, Seistān was never completely subjugated and the agents ['āmils] of the Caliphs "... continued to collect tribute from Ratbîl of Sijistân as well as they could, and kept appointing their agents to rule over the regions to which Islam had reached."25

The above is a short account of the epic struggle of the Hindu kings of Kābul and Zābul against the all-powerful Arabs for more than two hundred years (650 to 860 CE). In spite of the repeated attempts made by the mighty Caliphs to subdue the Indian States of Kābul and Zābul, we find the same line of Indian rulers. known to the Arabs as Ranbal or Ratbil, still ruling in Kābul in the year 867 CE. In that year, Minhāj-i-Sirāj informs us that after the conquest of Seistan by Ya'qub ibn Lāyth, "...the sons of Darhim, Nașr and Ṣāliḥ, had fled to Kābul, and had sought shelter with the "Shāh," as he is styled, of the that territory, whose name was Ratbel or Rantbel..."26

Since the beginning of the ninth century CE the position of the Shāhi king, styled by the Arabs as Ranbal, began to grow critical. They were threatened on one side by the Arabs and by the Karkota-s in Kaśmir (631 to 855 CE) on the other. The Karkota-s conquered Takṣaśilā [Taxila] from them. The raids of the Arabs on the southern dominions of Kāśmīr²⁷ had convinced the Kārkoṭa-s of the common danger facing the Indian States, but only for some time. The wise policy pursued by Lalitāditya Mukta-pida (713-50 ce), the Kārkota

²² Ibid. p. 417

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 418

²⁵ Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhurī, p. 155

²⁶ The Țabakăt-i Nasıri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj. Tr. Raverty, H G. London: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873. p. 22, fn. 5 [Translated from the original Persian chronicle. -Ed.]

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj] 27 Kuáb Futüh al-Buldan of al-Baladhuri, pp. 230-31

king, who conferred high offices on the Shāhi princes in his court, 28 was not followed by his successors.

The severity of this twofold struggle must have been a terrible strain on the Shāhi-s and probably largely contributed to bring about the revolution which is described by al-Bîrūnī. The last Turki-Shāhi (or 'kṣatriya' of Xuanzang) prince, Lagatūrmān was imprisoned by his brāhmana wazir, Kallar alias Lallya, who founded an independent dynasty, which may conveniently be called the Hindu-Shāhi-s. Torn by internal dissensions. the Hindu State of Kābul and Zābul, which had so far successfully resisted the might of the great Arab emire. succumbed at least temporarily in 867 CE to the wiles of the Turkish leader Ya'qūb ibn Lāyth, who started his career as a robber in Seistan and later on founded the Saffarid dynasty of Persia. The following is the detailed account of the deceitful stratagem employed by Ya'qūb, described by Nūr-ud-dīn Muḥammad 'Awfī²⁹ _

When Sálih Nasr fled from before him [Ya'qūb i. Lāyth]. he went and joined Rúsal [Ranbal], and excited him to collect his troops and march against Ya'kúb Lais. Rúsal assembled his armies, and placed Sálih Nasr at the head of the foremost division. Ya'kúb Lais on receiving the intelligence, called together some old and experienced men and asked their advice as to the means of repelling the invasion of Rúsal. They advised him to oppose the enemy, and represented that although he had a small force, yet he ought to trust in the help of God, and resort to every wile and stratagem to harass his opponent, but not to engage in a pitched battle... Ya'kúb Lais now had recourse to stratagem and deception. He sent one

28 Rāja-tarangiņi of Kalhaņa, 4.142-43

of his confidential servants to Rúsal with a message to say that, he wished to come and meet him, and render him homage... When the ambassadors of Ya'kúb came to Rúsal and delivered the message to him, it was very agreeable to him, because he was greatly harassed by Ya'kúb, who continually made incursions into his country, and attacked it in different directions. He made the ambassadors welcome, and sent messages to Ya'kúb. giving him many kind promises and holding out hopes of preferment...

When both the armies came in front of each other Rúsal called Sálih Nasr and told him that as the enemy had come to proffer his submission, there must be no fighting. A day was fixed for a parley between the parties. It was not the habit of Rúsal to ride a horse, but he used to sit on a throne which a party of his servants carried o their shoulders. When both the armies were drawn up in array. Rúsal seated himself upon his throne and ordered his troops to stand in line on each side of it. Ya'kúb with his three thousand brave horsemen advanced between these two lines, and his men carried their lances concealed behind their horses and wearing coats of mail under their garments. The Almighty made the army of Rúsal blind, so that they did not see the lances. When Ya'kib drew near Rúsal, he bowed his head as if to do homage, but he raised the lance and thrust it into the back of Rúsal, so that he died on the spot... The infidels, when they saw the head of Rúsal upon the point of a spear, took to flight, and great bloodshed ensued. The bride of victory drew aside her veil and Ya'kúb returned victorious... This victory which he achieved was the result of treachery and deception, such as no one had ever committed.30

²⁹ In his chronicle Jawāmi ul-Hikāyāt wa Lawāmi' ul-Riwāyāt

One permanent effect of the invasion of Ya'qūb ibn One permanent of Zābul ceased to exist after 870 CE.

The king of Zābulistān was killed and the people embraced Islam. Henceforth this petty state, that had carried on a prolonged and heroic resistance against the Arab aggression for more than two hundred years. ceased to belong to India either politically or culturally. But Kābul probably regained independence and formed a part of the Hindu Shāhiya kingdom...31

Al-Mas'ūdī who visited the Indus valley in 915 CE. "...designates the prince who reigned at Kábul by the same title as he held when the Arabs penetrated for the first time into these regions."32 Sir H M Elliot also affirms the same view about Kābul.

It is evident, however, that the first inroads were not followed by permanent occupation, and that there was no entire subversion of the native dynasty till the Ghaznivide dynasty rose to power.33

The Şaffarid dynasty founded by Yaqub did not last long. It was replaced by the Persian Sāmānid-s, who do not seem to have made any vigorous effort to extend their authority in the Kābul valley. Under the Hindu-Shāhi-s, their kingdom seems to have regained some of its lost glory. Kalhaṇa in his Rāja-taraṅgiṇī has numerous verses in their praise -

...the illustrious Lalliya Śāhi-who, [placed] between the rulers of the Darads and Turuskas [Muslims] as be-

33 Ibid., p. 413

tween a lion and a boar, resembled Āryāvarta [as it lies] between the Himālaya and Vindhya [mountains]; in whose town of Udabhāṇḍa [other] kings found safety. just as the mountains in the oceans when threatened by the danger of having their wings cut [by Indra], whose mighty glory [outshone] the kings in the North, just as the sun-disc [outshines] the stars in heaven...34

This is strong testimony of the historian of Kāśmir to the strength of the illustrious Shāhi princes. After the temporary loss of Kābul in 870 CE, they transferred their capital to Udabhāṇḍapura, the old capital of Kiapi-shi, and they were still the guardians of the northwestern gates of India in the tenth century CE, when the next great deluge of the Turks threatened India. In the reign of Kamalū, the Hindu-Shāhi-s were already known as the Rāi-s of Hindustān.35

As already mentioned, the Sāmānīd-s of Persia who succeeded the Şaffārīd-s, did not make systematic efforts to extend their power in the Kābul valley. In 933 CE, we find a person named Abū Bakr-i-Lawik ruling as Wālī of Zābulistān at Ghaznī.36 As the word 'wālī'

[Hereafter referred to as: Stein's English translation of Kalhana's Rāja-tarangini]

[The relevant verses from the Raja-tarangini are -

दरत्तुरुष्काधिपयोर्थः केसरिवराहयोः ।

हिमबद्धि-ध्ययोगसीदार्यावर्त इवान्तरे ॥ 152

उदभाण्डपुरे तस्थुर्यदीये निर्भवा चृपाः।

पक्षच्छेद्व्यथात्रस्ता महार्णव इवाद्रयः ॥ 153

नक्षत्रेष्विव भूपेषु नभमीवोत्तरापथे।

बस्येव विपुला स्व्यातिर्मार्तण्डस्येव मण्डलम् ॥ 154 —Ed.]

35 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 172 (Citing the Jawami ul-Hikāyāt

of Nür-ud-din Muhammad 'Awfi)

36 Ţabaķāt-i-Nāsiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 71

³¹ Ganguly, D.C. The Age of Imperial Kanauj. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 4). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1955. p. 126 32 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 412

³⁴ Kalhana's Rājatarangiņī: A Chronicle of the Kings of Kāśmīr. Vol. 1. Tr. Stein, Marc Aurel. Westminster: Archibald Constable and Co., 1900. p. 206 (5.152-54)

signifies a 'chief' or a 'sovereign,' it is likely that he held almost an independent authority. 37 In 963 CE, this ruler was driven out of Ghazni by Alb-tigin, a Turk. ish slave of the Sāmānīd 'Amīr Manṣūr, who founded an independent power and repulsed all efforts of his former masters to dislodge him. 38 The establishment of this Turkish principality at once led to a renewal of the aggressive policy of the Muslims, which further drove the Shāhi-s towards the Punjab and ultimately led to their extinction in the first quarter of the eleventh cen. tury CE.

The Shāhi king to face this new tide of the Turks was Jaya-pāla [Jaipal], who "...probably ascended the throne in the last quarter of the tenth century A.D."39 According to Firișta [Muḥammad-Kāsim Hindu-shāh Astarābādī "Firiṣta"], the dominions of Jaya-pāla extended "...in length from Surhind to Lumghan, and in breadth from the kingdom of Kashmeer to Moultan."40 He further records.

He resided in the fort of Bitunda [Bhātinda] for the convenience of taking steps for opposing the Mahomedans; and finding, by their repeated invasions, that he was unlikely to enjoy tranquillity at home, he raised a great army...41

41 Ibid.

the kings of Kāśmīr, the 'Amīr-s of Mūltān and the Gurjara-Pratihāra-s of Kanauj, the Shāhi-s had recreated their kingdom in the land of the five rivers and they had once again become so powerful that Minhāj calls Jaya-pāla "...the greatest of the Rāes [kings] of Hind."43 The odes of [Abū-l Kāsim Hasan bin Ahmad] 'Unsurī, the court poet of Mahmud of Ghazni, describe the power of Jaya-pāla in these words -

Thou hast heard the account of Jaipál, the King of the Hindus, who was exalted above the other chiefs of the world. His army was more numerous than the stars of heaven; the stones on the face of the earth did not equal it, or the drops of rain. His soldiers had so imbrued their hands in blood, that their swords were as red as the morning dawn. Hadst thou seen his spears gleaming, like tongues of flame though black smoke, thou wouldst have said his host was dispersed in the wilderness of hell. Sense fled from the brain at fear of him; and the light of the eye was confounded.44

Firișta informs us that during the lifetime of Albtigin, his general Subūk-tigin had commenced predatory excursions in the provinces of Lamghan and Multan. This led to an alliance between the Shāhi-s and the

³⁷ Ibid., p. 71, fn. 5

³⁸ Ibid., p. 43, fn. 4

³⁹ Ganguly, D C. The Age of Imperial Kanauj. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 4). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1955. p. 114

⁴⁰ Briggs, John. History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India Till the Year A.D. 1612. Vol. 1. Calcutta: R Cambray & Co., 1908. P. 15 [Translated from the original Persian treatise Tarik-i-Firista of Muḥammad-Kāsim Hindu-shāh Astarābādi "Firișta." — Ed.] [Hereafter referred to as: Tārīķ-i-Firista]

However, S H Hodīvālā thinks that both Firișta and Raverty have confused Waihind with Bhātinda which assertion is demonstrably erroneous.42 Taking advantage of the weakness, at this time, of

⁴² Hodīvālā, Shāhpūrshāh Hormasji. Studies in Indo-Muslim History: A Critical Commentary on 'Elliot and Dowson's History of India as Told by its own Historians'. Bombay, 1939. p. 142

⁴³ Tabakāt-i-Nāsiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 82

⁴⁴ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 4. London: Trübner and Co., 1872. pp. 515-16

'Amir-s of Mültan. But in 977 CE, when Subük-tigin succeeded to the throne of Ghazni, the former success. ful in detatching Shaikh Hamid Khān Lodī, the Mültān 'Amīr, from the alliance. He "...from motives of policy

avoided the districts of Sheikh Humeed by every means in his power..."45

Subūk-tigīn then led frequent raids against the territories of Jaya-pāla, the Shāhi ruler of Udabhāṇḍa. Abū al-Nasr 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Utbī gives a religious colouring to these raids.46 He says that Jaya-pāla "...saw no remedy, except in beginning to act and to take up arms. He assembled, therefore, all his princes, feudatories, nobles, and allies, and with a great army approached the Musalmán territory..."47

This was the first of the two raids organised by Jaya-pāla against the territory of Ghazni. He was perhaps the last Indian ruler to show such spirit of aggression, so sadly lacking in later Rājpūt kings. Muḥammad Nāzim places this attack on Ghaznī about the year 986-87 CE.48 According to al-'Utbī, the battle lasted several days and the warriors of Subūk-tigin including the prince Mahmud were reduced to despair. But a snowstorm and rains upset the plans of Jaya-pāla who

opened negotiations for peace. He sent the following message to Subūk-tigin -

"You have heard and know the nobleness of Indians, how that, in seasons of extremity, they fear not death or destruction. They run the edge of the sword over those who wrong them, when there is no means of escaping the blade. In affairs of honour and renown we would place ourselves upon the fire like roast meat, and upon the dagger like the sunrays."49

Temporary peace was concluded but there could be no lasting peace between the two and Subūk-tigīn soon raided Lamghan, the most populous and flourishing territory of the Shāhi kingdom. Upon this, Jaya-pāla appealed to the rulers of India imploring their aid against the Muslim aggressor. According to Firișta,

...the neighbouring Rajas supplied troops and money, particularly those of Dehly [Delhi], Ajmeer [Ajmer], Kalunjur [Kăliñjar], and Kunowj [Kanauj], whose forces having united in the Punjab...50

Firișta's statement, though uncorroborated by any contemporary authority, seems to suggest that the Tomara-s, Cāhamāṇa-s, and the Candela-s realised the grave peril threatening their country and helped Jaya-pāla with men and money to the extent that the latter's army amounted to "...a hundred thousand horse [sic], besides an innumerable host of foot."51

This was the last attempt of Jaya-pāla to crush the rising power of Ghaznī and the two armies met on the

⁴⁵ Tarik-i-Firista, p. 9

⁴⁶ Reynolds, James. The Kitab-i-Yamini, Historical Memoirs of the Amír Sabaktagin, and the Sutlán Mahmúd of Ghazna. London: The Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1858. pp. 33-36 [Translated from the Persian version of the contemporary Arabic chronicle Tārīķ-i-Yamīnī of Abū al-Nasr 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Utbī. —Ed.]

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Tārīķ-i-Yamīni of al-'Utb1]

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 34

⁴⁸ Nāzim, Muḥammad. The Life and Times of Sultan Mahmūd of Ghazna. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931. p. 29

⁴⁹ Tāriķ-i-Yamîni of al-'Utbî, p. 37

⁵⁰ Tärik-i-Firista, p. 18

⁵¹ Ibid.

confines of Lamghan. The superiority of Muslim cavalry coupled with the tactics of Subūk-tigīn, who attacked "...one particular point of the Hindoo line, so that it might continually have to encounter fresh troops, "52 leading to the defeat of Jaya-pāla's forces after fierce fight. In al-'Utbi's words,

Men and officers mingled in close conflict, and all other arms were useless except the sword. The dust which arose prevented the eyes from seeing; swords could not be distinguished from spears, men from elephants, the valiants from cowards. 53

As a result of this victory the territories of the province of Lamghan were annexed by Subūk-tigin.

With the accession of Mahmud to the throne of Ghaznī in 998 CE, the hostilities between the Shāhi king and the Ghaznavides were resumed. In 1001 CE, Maḥmūd advanced up to Peshawar. There Jaya-pāla made "...a bold resolve...to offer opposition, and of his rapid advance...with 12,000 horsemen, 30,000 foot soldiers, and 300 elephants, at the ponderous weight of which the lighter earth groaned..."54 But it appears from al-'Utbī's account that Jaya-pāla did not get sufficient time for the full mobilisation of his army and " ... he delayed the battle by stratagem and defence to enable the troops and men of the various clans and tribes left behind to join him."55 Before full mobilisation

could materialise, Maḥmūd "...made haste and ordered an advance..."56 After an obstinate battle, Maḥmūd was victorious and Jaya-pāla along with members of his family was taken captive.

Al-'Utbi informs us that after some time, Maḥmūd "...made peace with Jaipal in return for fifty elephants and kept his son [Sukha-pāla] as a hostage that there be no breach of the treaty."57 But Jaya-pāla after his captivity in the hands of Muslims, considered himself unworthy of the throne and "...having ordered a funeral pile to be prepared, he set fire to it with his own hands, and perished therein."58

Jaya-pāla's son and successor Ānanda-pāla kept up the noble and gallant tradition of the Shāhi-s. When in 1005-6 CE, Maḥmūd marched against Mūltān, Ānanda-pāla refused to permit his armies to pass through his kingdom. This led to a severe engagement near Peshawar in which Ananda-pala was defeated and he escaped to the Kāśmīr hills.

However, soon afterwards, Mahmud had to hasten back to Ghazni to meet the attack of the Turkish leader, Ilak Khān [of the Qarakhānīd-s] after placing his Indian possession in the hands of Ananda-pāla's son [or brother, according to some accounts], Sukha-pāla, who had been converted to Islam under the name of Nawāsa Shāh [and made the Governor of Mūltān by Maḥmūd]. Sukha-pāla soon afterwards renounced Islam and returned to the Hindu fold. Here Ananda-pala failed to exploit the difficulties of Mahmud to his own advantage. He extended no helping hand to his own

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 23 (Citing the Tārīķ-i-Yamīnī of

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 25

⁵⁵ Sharma, Sri Ram. Studies in Medieval Indian History. Sholapur. Institute of Public Administration, 1956. p. 37 [Translated from the original Arabic chronicle Tarik-i-Yamini of Abū al-Nasr 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Utbī, —Ed.]

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 39

⁵⁸ Tārīķ-i-Firișta, p. 38

son [or brother], who was defeated, taken prisoner and imprisoned for life. 59 Further, Ananda-pāla actually offered assistance to Mahmud against his Turkish foe llak Khān. Al-Birūni describes this ill-conceived magna. nimity of the Shāhi monarch -

I admire the following passage in a letter of Anandapâla. which he wrote to the prince Mahmud, when the relations between them were already strained to the utmost "I have learned that the Turks have rebelled against you in Khurâsân. If you wish, I shall come to you with 5,000 horsemen, 10,000 foot-soldiers, and 100 elephants, or. if you wish, I shall send you my son with double the number. In acting thus, I do not speculate on the impression which this will make on you. I have been conquered by you, and therefore I do not wish that another man should conquer you."

The same prince cherished the bitterest hatred against the Muhammadans from the time when his son was made a prisoner...60

Ananda-pāla thus lost the only chance of crushing his formidable enemy and was soon to pay the penalty. In 1008 CE, Mahmud was determined to attack Ananda-pāla.

Anundpal [Ānanda-pāla], hearing of his intentions, sent ambassadors on all sides, inviting the assistance of the other princes of Hindoostan, who now considered the expulsion of Mahomedans from India as a sacred duty. Accordingly the rajas of Oojein [Ujjain], Gualiar [Gwalior], Kalunjur [Kāliñjar], Kunowj [Kanauj], Dehly [Delhi], and Ajmeer [Ajmer] entered into a confederacy, and

collecting their forces advanced towards Punjab with the greatest army that had yet taken the field. The Indians and Mahomedans arrived in sight of each other on a plain on the confines of Pishawur [Peshawar], where they remained encamped for forty days without coming into action. The troops of the idolators daily increased in number. The Hindoo females, on this occasion, sold their jewels, and melted down their golden ornaments (which they sent from distant parts,) to furnish resources for the war; and the Gukkurs [Khokhar-s], and other warlike tribes joining the army, surrounded the Mahomedans, who were obliged to entrench their camp.61

There is no reason to disbelieve Firișta on the sole ground that the fact of popular resistance against Mahmud has not been mentioned by earlier Muslim historians, who might not have relished to mention the fact. This was second confederacy of the Indian kings against the Muslims in two decades. Mahmud did not dare to attack for forty days and then "...ordered six thousand archers to the front to endeavour to provoke the enemy to attack his entrenchments."62

The plan succeeded and the Khokhar-s, 30,000 in number, "...penetrated into the Mahomedan lines, where a dreadful carnage ensued, and 5000 Mahomedans in a few minutes were slain."63 Al-'Utbī too admits, "The battle lasted from morning till evening and the infidels were near gaining the victory..."64 But the Sultan sent a body of his personal guards to attack, as al-'Utbī

⁶¹ Tārīk-i-Firista, p. 46

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 47

⁶⁴ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 33 (Citing the Tārīķ-i-Yamīnī of al-'Utbī)

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 45

⁶⁰ Alberuni's India, Vol. 2, pp. 13-14

remarks, "...the enemy in rear..."65 But this attack of a few of his chosen slaves does not explain the defeat of Ānanda-pāla's forces. Firiṣta's account of the flight of Ānanda-pāla's elephant is more convincing. What probably happened was that Maḥmūd, perceiving the disaster confronting his army, and as a last recourse, dispatched some of his chosen followers to attack the elephant of Ānanda-pāla, who could be detected from afar. Ānanda-pāla's elephant became "...unruly from the effects of the naphtha balls, and the flights of arrows, turned and fled."66

The Hindu army, deserted by their general, also turned panickly and fled away. Soon afterwards, Maḥmūd again started his depredation on the Shāhi dominions. But even as late as 1012 CE, Firiṣta informs us that Maḥmūd did not advance further east from Thanesar [Sthānīśvara] from "...apprehension of Anundpal, Raja of Lahore [Lavapuri]." His nobles urged upon him the necessity of complete elimination of the Shāhi power before penetrating to the Indian interior.68

So in 1013 CE, Maḥmūd marched against Trilocana-pāla, who had ascended the throne after Ānanda-pāla's death. Trilocana-pāla displaying rare combination of bravery and caution, retired to the hills of Kāśmīr and along with his son, Niḍar Bhīma, took up a position "...within a pass, which was narrow, precipitous, and inaccessible." From here, Trilocana-pāla

appealed to the Kāśmīri king, Saṅgrāma-rājā, for help. The latter sent his prime minister, Tuṅga, with a large army, to assist Trilocana-pāla. Kalhaṇa has given an interesting and detailed account of the subsequent battle against Maḥmūd. The account deserves to be reproduced in full since it is the only detailed description of a battle against early Muslim invaders from an Indian viewpoint —

श्रीत्रिलोचनपालस्य शाहेः साहायकार्थिनः। देशं ततो मार्गशीर्षे मासि तं व्यसृजन्नृपः॥ 47

In the month of Mārgaśirṣa the king despatched him (Tunga) to the country of the illustrious Śāhi Trilocanapāla, who has asked for help.

राजपुत्रमहामात्यसामन्तादिनिरन्तरम् । सैन्यं तमन्वगाद्भरि भुवनक्षोभनक्षमम् ॥ 48

A large army, attended by many Rājaputras, chief councillors, feudal chiefs, and others [of rank], capable of making the earth shake, followed him.

अग्रागतेन ससुतः शाहिना कृतसत्क्रियः।

पञ्चषाणि दिनान्यासीलद्देशे स यदोन्मदः॥ 49

प्रजागरचरन्यासराश्वाभ्यासादिवासनाः ।

अभियोगोचिताः शाहिरपश्यंस्तं तदाऽब्रवीत् ॥ 50

When he, together with his son, had been hospitably received by the Sahi, who had gone to meet him, and had been in the land for five or six days, the Sāhi noticed that they gave no thought to night-watches, the posting of scouts, to military exercises, and other [preparations] proper for an attack, and spoke thus to Tunga, who was intoxicated [with self-confidence]:

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 34

⁶⁶ Tarik-i-Firista, p. 47

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 52

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 52-53

⁶⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 38 (Citing the Tarik-i-Yamini of al-'Utbi)

⁷⁰ Rāja-tarangini 7.47-64

⁷¹ Stein's English translation of Kalhana's Rāja-tarangini, pp. 270-73 (7.47-64)

तुरुष्कसमरे यावन्न यूयं कृतबुद्धयः । आलस्यविवशास्तावतिष्ठतास्मिन्गिरेस्तटे ॥ 51

"Until you have become acquainted with the Turuska warfare you should post youself on the scarp of the hill, [keeping] idle against your desire."

एवं त्रिलोचनेनोक्तं सोऽग्रहीन हितं वचः।

तस्थौ परं समं सैन्यैरुत्सेकादाहवोत्सुकः ॥ 52

This good counsel of Trilocana[pāla] he in his pride did not accept, but remained, together with his troops, eagerly looking out for battle.

हम्मीरेण तदा सैन्यं जिज्ञासार्थं विसर्जितम् ।

तौषीपारे मितप्रायैस्ततस्तीर्त्वाऽवधीद्वलैः ॥ 53

Then he crossed thence with a rather small force to the other bank of the Tauṣī, and defeated a corps which Hammīra [Muslim ruler] had sent on reconnaissance.

ततस्तमाहितोत्सेकमपि शाहिः पुनः पुनः।

जगादाहवतत्त्वज्ञः पूर्वोक्तामेव संविदम् ॥ 54

Though he was filled thereupon with pride, the Śāhi, experienced in war, repeated again and again the same advice he had given before.

स तस्य नाग्रहीद्वाक्यं रणौत्सुक्यवशंवदः ।

पत्यासन्नविनाशानामुपदेशो निरर्थकः ॥ 55

Blinded by his desire for battle, he did not accept the Sāhi's counsel. Advice is no use to those whose destruction is near.

भातस्ततः स्वयं कोपात्तुरुष्कानीकनायकः ।

सर्वामिसारेणागच्छच्छलाहवविशारदः ॥ 56

In the morning then came in fury and in full battle array the leader of the Turuşka army himself, skilled in stratagem.

अथ तुङ्गस्य कटकः सहसा भन्नमाययौ । शाहिसेन्यं परं सङ्घ्ये दहशे विचरत्क्षणम् ॥ 57 Thereupon the army of Tunga dispersed immediately. The Śāhi's force, however, was seen for [some] time moving about in the battle.

शाहिसैन्ये गतेऽप्यासीज्जयसिंहः स्फुरन्नणे । श्रीवर्धनश्च सङ्गामे विभ्रमार्कश्च डामरः ॥ 58

Even when the Śāhi's army was gone, Jayasimha rushed about fighting, also Śrīvandhana and Vibhramārka, the Dāmara, of Saṃgrāma's family.

घोरे तुरङ्गतुमुले प्रहरद्भिक्षिभिभेटैः।

वीरक्षेत्रे निजे देशे रक्षितस्तैर्यशःक्षयः ॥ 59

These three valiant men, fighting on the terrible field of battle which resounded with [the tramp of] horses, preserved the honour of their country from being lost.

कक्षिलोचनपालस्य माहात्म्यं वक्तुमीश्वरः।

निःसङ्ख्या अपि यं सङ्ख्ये न जेतुमशकन्द्रिषः ॥ 60

Who would describe the greatness of Trilocanapāla, whom numberless enemies even could not defeat in battle?

शुशुभे रुधिरासारवर्षी युद्धे त्रिलोचनः।

कल्पान्तदहनज्योतिर्विसारीव त्रिलोचनः ॥ 61

Trilocana[pāla], causing floods of blood to pour forth in battle, resembled Śiva (trilocana) when sending forth the fire which burns the world at the end of the Kalpa.

स योधियत्वा सङ्गामे कोटीः कङ्कटवाहिनाम्। एकाकी कार्यमर्मज्ञो निर्ययौ रिपुसङ्कटात्॥ 62

After fighting crores of armour-clad soldiers in the battle this [prince], who was experienced in affairs, came forth singly from among the foes pressing [around him].

गते त्रिलोचने दूरमशेषं क्षितिमण्डलम् । प्रचण्डचण्डालचमुशलभच्छायमानशे ॥ 63

When Trilocana[pāla] had gone afar, the whole country was overshadowed by hosts of fierce Candalas which [resembled clouds of] locusts.

सम्प्राप्तविजयोऽप्यासीन हम्मीरः समुख्नुसन् । श्रीत्रिलोचनपालस्य स्मरव्शौर्यममानुषम् ॥ 64

Even after he had obtained his victory, Hammira did not breathe freely, thinking of the superhuman prowess of the illustrious Trilocanapala.

Kalhana thus testifies not only to the personal bray. ery of Trilocana-pāla but also to his great sagacity in advising Tunga to remain entrenched in the mountainous terrain of the valley of the river Tausi [also called Tosi or Tawi]. Al-'Utbī also confirms that the "...action lasted for several days without intermission..."72 and the Indians only lost the battle when they "...were drawn into the plain to fight, like oil sucked up into the wick of the candle, or like iron attracted by a magnet, and there they were assaulted and killed by the cavalry, just as the knight on the chess-board demolishes pawns."73

Kalhana further informs us that even after this victory, "...Hammira did not breathe freely, thinking of the superhuman prowess of the illustrious Trilocanpāla"74 Trilocana-pāla and his son, Bhīma-pāla (known as 'Nidar Bhīma') seem to have retired to the hilly Kāśmīr district of Lohara (Lohkot of Muslim historians) and from there carried on the struggle for sometime. As al-Bīrūnī informs us,75 Trilocana-pāla was killed in 1021 CE, and his son Bhīma-pāla five year later (1026), evidently fighting against the invaders up to the last.

Thus ended the epic struggle of the Shāhi-s which created a profound impression even on the minds of Muslims, their worst opponents; al-Bīrūnī pays a fulsome tribute to these guardians of the Indian border -

The Hindu Shâhiya dynasty is now extinct, and of the whole house there is no longer the slightest remnant in existence. We must say that, in all their grandeur, they never slackened in the ardent desire of doing that which is good and right, that they were men of noble sentiment and noble bearing.76

The Shāhi-s had fought with valour and tenacity for nearly half a century. They ultimately collapsed against the repeated onslaughts of the Turks, led by one of the greatest generals that their race has produced. But not before three generations of the Shāhi kings had sacrificed themselves on the battlefield. Kalhana, writing about one hundred and thirty years after the event, bears ample evidence to the profound impression that their fall produced on the minds of all contemporaries. He plaintively writes that in his time the very name of the Shāhi-s has vanished and one asked oneself, whether "...with its kings, ministers, and its court, it ever was or was not."77

⁷² Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 38 (Citing the Tarik-i-Yamini of al-'Utbi)

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Stein's English translation of Kalhana's Rāja-tarangini, p. 273 (7.64)

⁷⁵ Alberuni's India, Vol. 2, p. 13

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Stein's English translation of Kalhana's Rāja-tarangini, p. 273

[[]स शाहिदेशः सामात्यः सभूभृतसपरिच्छदः ।

किमभुत्किमु वा नाभूदिति सञ्चिन्त्यतेधुना ॥ 7.69 —Ed.)

4

Resistance to the Ghaznavides

briefly noted in the previous chapter. Maḥmūd, a military leader of a rare order, ascended the throne in 998 CE. Within two years, he defeated the Sāmānīd king 'Abd al-Malik and his associates and established control over Herāt, Balkh [Bahlīka], Būst, and Khurāsān. The Caliph al-Qādir Billāh (r. 991–1031 CE) conferred on him the titles of Yamīn-ud-Daulāh and Amīn-ul-Millāt. Maḥmūd is said to have taken a pledge to lead an expedition [holy war]¹ against Hind [India] every year.² Nizām-ud-dīn Aḥmad Bakh-shī in his

Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 2. London: Trübner

and Co., 1869. p. 24 (Citing the *Tārīķ-i-Yamīnī* of al-'Utbī) [Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2]

^{1 [}Sita Ram Goel writes, "Medieval Muslim historians tell us that Mahmud Ghaznavi used to be highly praised and heartily congratulated by all Islamic countries of that time, whenever he returned from India with plunder and prisoners of war, and with idols of Hindu Gods which were placed on the doorsteps to mosques in Ghazni, Baghdad, Mecca and Medina for being trampled upon by the faithful. Whatever their own differences with Mahmud Ghaznavi, in this context they were all agreed that he was doing the work of Allah and had the blessings of the Prophet to support him." – pp. 46–47 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) —Editor]

2 Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its

Tabakāt-i-Akbarī gives the total number of his expeditions to India as twelve. Sir H M Elliot enumerates as many as seventeen expeditions.³

The like of Maḥmūd's invasions India had not witnessed after the invasions of the Hūṇa-s, five centuries earlier. Maḥmūd's armies swept over North India, burning and looting its sacred shrines, destroying cities, and enslaving hundreds and thousands of men, women, and children.⁴ As Prof. Habib puts it, "The invasions of Sultan Mahmud only brought disgrace to the creed he professed."⁵

It is not within the scope of the present work to emunerate all the various Indian expeditions of Maḥmūd. But the contemporary Muslim historians⁶ seem to imply that Maḥmūd's armies easily vanquished the infidel

³ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, pp. 434-78 (Appendix Note D)

^{4 [}Mahmud was interested not merely in looting and plundering. He wanted to build a huge empire. Sita Ram Goel writes about how his empire included Khurasan, Persia (Iran), Iraq, most of Central Asia, the Shähiya domain in the northwest of India, Mültän, and parts of Punjab. It "...goes to prove that he would not have hesitated in doing the same to other parts of northern and western India, had he found it feasible. He failed in this design not because he lacked the intention but because he met a very stiff resistance in these parts. It is true that his superior military might and skill as a commander succeeded in defeating, in the initial encounters, most of the Hindu princes he met on the field of battle. But the rising tide of resistance in the wake of every victory threatened to engulf him soon after, with the result that he had to content himself with plunder and prisoners of war, and relinquish the coveted territories." - p. 19 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) -Ed.]

⁵ Prof. Mohammad Habib's Introduction (p. XIII) to Khaliq Ahmad Nizami's Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century. Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961

⁶ Abū al-Nasr 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Utbī (in his Kitāb-i-Yamīnī or Tārīķ-i-Yamīnī) and Abū Sa'īd 'Abd-al-Ḥayy ibn Zaḥḥāk bin Maḥmūd Gardīzī (in his Zayn al-Akbār)

armies and there was no opposition worth the name.7 But a closer scrutiny of all available sources-contemporary and later-reveals a different story. The valiant struggle of the three generations of Shāhi kings has already been noted in the previous chapter. In the Battle of Waihind against Ānanda-pāla, in 1008 CE Maḥmūd had to withdraw "...from the thick of the fight, that he might stop the battle for that day."8 It was sheer ill-luck that Ananda-pāla's elephant turned unruly and Mahmūd won the day.

Even after the end of all organised resistance of the Shāhi-s with the defeat of Trilocana-pāla, the Shāhi-s, under his son the 'Nidar' Bhīma, or Bhīma 'the Dauntless,' continued to offer resistance from their strongholds near the Kāśmīr border. The aim of Maḥmūd's expediton of 1015 CE, was the liquidation of Lohkot, the gateway to Kāśmīr and perhaps the last stronghold of the Shāhi-s. Nizāmud-dīn in his Tabakāt-i-Akbarī ascribes this expedition to a year later and calls the place simply 'Kot.' It is interesting to note that the contemporary historians make no allusion to this expedition

^{7 [}This holds good not only for the Muslim chroniclers but also for post-Independent India's Marxist historians who glorified the barbaric Islamic invaders and downplayed the massive resistance offered to them by Hindu kings. In his Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984), Sita Ram Goel writes, "...India's history has become a history of foreign invaders - Aryans, Iranians, Greeks, Parthians, Scythians, Kushans, Arabs, Turks, Persians, Portuguese, Dutch, French, and British rather than a history of the greatest civilization which the world has known, and later on of Hindu heroism which fought and ultimately frustrated all foreign invaders." (p. 2) He then says, "The standard text-books of Indian history taught in our schools and colleges do not highlight at all the stupendous failure of the Islamised Arabs in the face of heroic Hindu resistance." (p. 18) -Ed] 8 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 447 (Citing the Tăriķ-i-Firișta)

which was entirely unsuccessful. Firista gives the following account of this campaign –

Mahmúd, in the year 406 [1015 CE], again marched with the design of entering Kashmír, and besieged the fort of Loh-kot, which was remarkable on account of its height and strength. After a while, when the snow began to fall, and the season became intensely cold, and the enemy received reinforcements from Kashmír, the Sultán was obliged to abandon his design, and return to Ghaznín. On his route, having lost his way, he came upon a place where the whole plain was covered with water—wherever they went they saw nothing but water. Many of his troops perished. This was the first disaster that the Sultán suffered in his campaign against India. After some days he extricated himself with great difficulty from his peril, and reached Ghaznín without having achieved any success.9

Of the other Indian invasions of Maḥmūd, I shall select only two or three more to prove my contention that it was not always easy for Maḥmūd in India. Twice Maḥmūd tried to subjugate the Candela ruler, Vidyā-dhara, who seems to have succeeded his father, Gaṇḍa, sometime before 1019 CE. According to 'Alī ibn al-Athīr, Maḥmūd of Ghaznī marched against India in 409 H (1018–19 CE) to protect his territories against the threatened attack of Bīdā (the Arabic phonetic equivalent of 'Vidyā'). This king, according to the author, "...was the greatest of the rulers of India in territory; he had the largest armies; and his country was named Khajuraho." The same author informs us that

⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 456 (Citing the *Tārīķ-i-Firiṣta*) 10 *Tārīkh-ul-Kāmil* of 'Alī ibn al-Athīr, Vol. 9, Tr. Bulak, 1874, pp. 115–16

Cited by Hem Chandra Ray in The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol. 2 (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1936) on p. 688

Bīdā had earlier fought and killed Rājya-pāla, the ruler of Kanauj for abjectly "...surrendering his territories to the Musalmans,"13

The later historians, Nizāmud-dīn Aḥmad and Firişta substitute the name of 'Nanda' in place of 'Bīda,' Firişta adds that many of the neighbouring princes had joined in league with Nanda Rai, whom he calls the Rājā of Kalunjur [Kāliñjar].12 He also says that the Rājā of Lahore, whom Nizāmud-dīn calls 'Pur-Jaipal,' grandson of Jaya-pāla, had also joined Nandā. 'Pur-Jaipal' is none other than 'Trilocana-pāla,' who together with his son, Nidar Bhīma, decided to join Vidyā-dhara Candela in a grand effort to check Mahmūd's advance into the Indian heartland.13 This also confirms the existence of a fierce sentiment of indignation aroused among the Indian princes, by the earlier abject surrender of Mathura and Kanauj by the weak Gurjara-Pratihāra ruler, Rājya-pāla. The Dubkund inscription of Kacchapaghāta Vikrama-simha, who controlled the fort of Gwalior, also says that one of his predecessors named Arjuna, anxious to serve the illustrious Vidvā-dhara, had fiercely slain in a great battle the illustrious Rājya-pāla.14

Abū Sa'īd 'Abd-al-Ḥayy ibn Zaḥḥāk bin Maḥmūd Gardīzī tells us that Vidyā-dhara's army "...consisted of 36,000 cavalry, 124,000 foot, and 650 elephants. This

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Briggs, John. History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India Till the Year A.D. 1612. Vol. 1. Calcutta: R Cambray & Co., 1908. p. 63 [Translated from the original Persian treatise Tārīk-i-Firista of Muhammad-Kāsim Hindu-shāh Astarābādī "Firista" —Ed. 1 [Hereafter referred to as: Tārīķ-i-Firista]

¹³ Nāzim, Muhammad. The Life and Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931. p. 204 14 Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 2. Ed. Burgess, J A S. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1894. p. 237

should give some idea of his resources... He [Maḥmūd] then sent a messenger to Nanda asking him to become a Muslim and save himself from all harm and distress. Nanda returned the reply that he had nothing to say to Mahmud except on the battlefield..."15

Nizāmud-dīn Aḥmad tells us -

After that the Sultān went to an elevated spot, so that he might look at, and make an estimate of the strength of Nandā's army. Then when he saw what a vast host it was, he repented of his coming; and placing the forehead of supplication on the ground of submission and humility, prayed for victory. 16

These accounts provide ample evidence of the great power of Vidyā-dhara, the Candela ruler. The engagement between the two adversaries was indecisive and probably Vidyā-dhara beat a strategic retreat under cover of the night and had "...taken away their horses and elephants..." Maḥmūd too gave up all idea of further advance into the Candela's territory and promptly set out towards Ghaznī. 18

¹⁵ Sharma, Sri Ram. Studies in Medieval Indian History. Sholapur: Institute of Public Administration, 1956. pp. 27-28 (Citing the Zayn al-Akbār of Gardīzī)

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Studies in Medieval Indian History]

¹⁶ The Tabaqāt-i-Akbarî. Vol. 1. Tr. De, B. Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society, 1927. p. 12 [Translated from the chronicle of Khwājah Nizām-ud-dīn Aḥmad Bakh-shī. —Ed.]

¹⁷ Studies in Medieval Indian History, p. 28

^{18 [}Sita Ram Goel writes, "Hindus could have destroyed him had they pursued him in his retreat... Hindus had lost [that vision]. Pursuit of a retreating enemy was contrary to the Rajput code of honour." – p. 23 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984).

On the contrary, the pursuit of an enemy when an opportunity presented itself is the prescribed norm in the tenets of Islam. Mus-

Three years later, in 1022 CE, Mahmud once again decided to cross swords with Vidyā-dhara. Gardīzī informs us that Mahmūd first invested the fort of Gwalior, but he "...failed to take it after investing it for four days and nights..."19 Mahmūd after negotiating peace, advanced to Kāliñjar. "But the fort was so situated that no man could scale its heights. It was not even possible to attack the fort by cutting down stones at its base. No plan seemed possible."20 This time also Mahmud failed to force a conclusion and the campaign ended in mutual gifts and compliments. Vidyā-dhara "...wrote a verse in Hindi and sent it to Mahmud. Mahmud had this recited to the Hindu, Persian and Turkish poets. Every one liked the verse and declared that it was not possible to write more elegant or more high flown lines. Mahmud therefore had an order drawn up conferring on Nanda [Vidyā-dhara] 15 forts in return for the verse that Nanda had composed in his honour. Besides this he sent many presents, women, jewels and dresses. Nanda also sent a good deal in return. Mahmud returned to Ghazni from there."21 Later Muslim historians have tried to represent this exchange of complimentaries as tribute. Evidently Mahmud had to be satisfied with only a verse and a few elephants.

The other time when Maḥmūd seems to have lost heart in India, was in 1026 CE when, after the conquest

lims are expected to strike terror in the hearts of *kāfirs* (*Al-Qur'ān* 3.151), not to be slack while pursuing the non-believers (4.104), smite the enemy's neck (8.12), slay the idolators and polytheists wherever they are found (9.5), etc. Not only do we see this in the precepts of the Islamic faith but also in practice of the faithful Muslims over the centuries. —*Ed.*]

¹⁹ Studies in Medieval Indian History, p. 29

²⁰ Ibid. 21 Ibid. p. 30

of Somnath [Somanātha], he had to beat a hasty retreat for fear of the federated armies of 'Paramdeo' who can be identified with either the Caulukya king Bhīma I, who ruled from 1022 to 1064, or with the great Paramāra ruler Bhoja who ruled from 1011 to 1055.

The Muslim historians have singled out this expedition to bestow lavish praise upon Maḥmūd. Maḥmūd started on this campaign after a great deal of prepara-

tions.

So he collected provisions for the passage, and loading 30,000 camels with water and corn, he started for Anhalwara [Anhilvada].²²

The preparations were necessary since the road from Mūltān to Gujarat lay "...through a barren desert, where there were neither inhabitants nor food."²³

According to almost all Muslim historians Maḥmūd reached Anhilvāḍa [Nahrwāla in Islamic chronicles; corresponds to modern day Patan, Gujarat] unopposed. But it is wrong to accuse Bhīma of cowardice. Anhilvāḍa had no natural defence, and situated as it was, in a flat sandy surface, could prove easy meat for Maḥmūd's Turkish cavalry. There might have also been an element of surprise in Maḥmūd's attack, since he did not follow the usual route from Mūltān to Gujarat.

At Modherā, eighteen miles to the south of Anhilvāda, a force of 20,000 men²⁴ put up a gallant resistance but they were overwhelmed.

Probably this gallant action was commemorated later by the building of the famous temple at Modhera which

²² Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 469 (Citing the al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh of 'Izz al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn al-Athīr)
23 Ibid

²⁴ Ibid., p. 470

bears an inscription dated VS [Vikrama Saṃvat] 1083 (A.D. 1026-27).25

The siege of Somnath was a prolonged affair. Probably Somnath had a fort guarding the temple. According to al-Bīrūnī,

The fortress which contained the idol and its treasures was not ancient, but was built only about a hundred years ago. 26

According to Firişta, the struggle for Somnath went on for three days. His graphic description of Hindu resistance runs as follows –

The Hindoos, urged by despair, returned to the defence of the works, and made so spirited a resistance, that the Mahomedans, unable to retain their footing, and wearied with fatigue, fell back on all sides, and were at length obliged to retire. Next morning the action was renewed, but as fast as the besiegers scaled the walls, so fast were they hurled down headlong by the besieged, who now seemed resolved to defend the place to the last. Thus the labours of the second day proved even more unsuccessful then those of the first. On the third day an army of idolators having arrived to reinforce the garrison, presented itself in order of battle in sight of the Ghizny [Ghazni] camp. Mahmood determined to prevent this attempt to raise the siege, and having ordered a party to keep the garrison in check, himself engaged the enemy in the field.

²⁵ Majumdar, Asoke Kumar. Chaulukyas of Gujarat. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1956. p. 45
26 Sachau, Edward C. Alberuni's India. Vol. 2. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1910. p. 105 [Translation of the Kitāb al-Hind of al-Bīrūnī]

The battle raged with great fury: victory was long doubtful, till two Indian princes, Brahma Dew [Brahma-deva] and Dabishleem, with other reinforcements, joined their countrymen during the action, and inspired them with fresh courage. Mahmood [Maḥmūd] at this moment perceiving his troops to waver, leaped from his horse, and prostrating himself before God implored his assistance.²⁷

Thus it is probable that Bhīma, aided by at least one other prince, tried to relieve the garrison of Somnath, but was forced to retreat after a bitter struggle. 'Alī ibn al-Athīr's account testifies to the supreme strength of their faith displayed by the Hindus when their organised defence collapsed.

Band after band of the defenders entered the temple to Somnát, and with their hands clasped round their necks, wept and passionately entreated him. Then again they issued forth to fight until they were slain, and but few were left alive.²⁸

Ghiyāś ad-Dīn Moḥammad Khwāndamīr also testifies to a bitter struggle lasting two days after which,

Those ignorant men ran in crowds to the idol temple, embraced Somnát, and came out again to fight until they were killed. Fifty thousand infidels were killed round about the temple, and the rest who escaped from the sword embarked in ships and fled away.²⁹

²⁷ Tārīķ-i-Firista, pp. 70-71

²⁸ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 470 (Citing the al-Kamil fi al-tarith

of 'Izz al-Dîn Abū al-Hasan 'Alī ibn al-Athīr)

²⁹ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 4. London: Trübner and Co., 1872. p. 182

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 4]

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The like of this faith, which inspired these fifty thousand sons of the soil to embrace death, will be hard to find in the annals of any other land.

Maḥmūd did not stay at Somnath for more than a few days. Probably by this time Bhīma's preparations to meet him during his retreat were ready. Gardīzī states,

Mahmud now returned. For Parm Dev [Paramdeo], Badshah of the Hindus, stood in his way disputing his path. Mahmud decided therefore to leave the right road back to Ghazni, for fear lest this great victory of his should turn into defeat. He left by way of Mansura towards Multan. His soldiers suffered many hardships partly on account of want of water and partly on account of the Jats of Sind and on other grounds. Many of the soldiers of Islam lost their lives on the way. At last Multan was sighted and Mahmud marched on to Ghazni. 30

Maḥmūd was anxious to avoid the armies of Bhīma and, with the help of guides, tried to find a less frequented route to Mūltān via the waterless desert of Kutch. However, Pratipal Bhatia suggests that we should not expect such a strong action from a young and inexperienced ruler like Bhīma I and that 'Paramdeo' referred to by Gardīzī, is in all probability the great Paramāra ruler Bhoja (r. 1011–55), "...who was known to be a sturdy champion of Hinduism."

To revenge the spoliation of their sacred shrine at Somnath, the Hindus posed as guides to lead Maḥmūd's army astray in desert of Kutch. Both Minhāj-i-Sirāj and Nūr-ud-dīn Muḥammad 'Awfī mention the episode of these brave and patriotic men. According to Minhāj,

Munshiram Manoharlal, 1970. pp. 82-83

³⁰ Studies in Medieval Indian History, p. 31 31 Bhatia, Pratipal. The Paramars (c. 800-1305 A.D.). New Delhl:

On his demand for guides, a Hindú came forward and promised to lead the way. When the army of Islám had for sometime [three days] marched behind him, and it became time to call a halt, people went in search of water, but it was nowhere found. The Sultán summoned the guide to his presence and asked him where water was procurable. He replied, "I have devoted my life for the sake of my deity Somnát, and have brought thee and thy army into this desert, where no water is, in order that all may perish." The Sultán ordered the guide to be killed, and the army to encamp...³²

The Jawāmi ul-Hiķāyāt of Muḥammad 'Awfī has the following version –

Two Hindús came to him and offered themselves as guides. They led the way for three days and conducted him to a desert where there was neither water nor grass. The Sultán asked them what kind of road they called that by which they had come, and whether there were any habitations in the neighbourhood? They replied that they had been commissioned by the Ráí, their chief, and had fearlessly devoted themselves to the work of bringing him thither. "Now you have," continued they, "the sea (daryá 'azím) before you, and the army of Hind behind. We have done our business, now do you do with us what you like, for not one single man of your army will escape." 33

The discomfiture of Maḥmūd during his return journey from Somnath, to which almost all Muslim historians testify, was the result of brilliant manouevring of Caulukya king Bhīma, rarely seen in Indian kings of his times. During the advance of Maḥmūd to Somnath,

33 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 192

³² Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, pp. 474-75 (Citing the Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj)

as already pointed out, Bhīma had only tried to check Maḥmūd at one place – Moḍherā. After that he left the way up to Somnath clear for Maḥmūd. Muslim historians attribute it to the superstitious belief of the Hindus that their gods will save them. But, in fact, Bhīma had in the mean time, reorganised his forces. If we believe Firiṣta, Bhīma tried to relieve the garrison at Somnath but failed to piece the encircling Muslim forces.

After that, Bhīma probably took "...the major part of his army to some place near Jaisalmere expecting Mahmūd to return by the route that he had followed during his advance..." Maḥmūd, by taking another route, avoided an encounter with this main body of Bhīma's army. Learning of the diversionary route being followed by Maḥmūd, probably Bhīma sent a section of his army under the Governor of Aṇhilvāḍa to hand at his rear and block his retreat. This seems implied in Khwāndamīr's statement that "...Sultán Mahmúd, after this glorious victory [i.e., at Somnath], reduced a fort in which the Governor of Nahrwála had taken refuge." Thus by his brilliant strategy, Bhīma "...probably succeeded in forcing Mahmud to leave Gujarat much earlier than he intended."

The last expedition of Maḥmūd in India was against the Jāṭ-s of the Jūd hills, "...who had molested his army on his return from Somnát.." The predatory incursions

³⁴ Majumdar, Asoke Kumar. Chaulukyas of Gujarat. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1956. p. 47

³⁵ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 4, p. 183 (Citing the Habīb as-Siyar of Ghiyāś ad-Dīn Moḥammad Khwāndamīr)

³⁶ Majumdar, Asoke Kumar. Chaulukyas of Gujarat. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1956. p. 48

³⁷ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 477 (Citing the Tabakāt-i-Akbari of Nizāmud-dīn Ahmad Bakhshi)

of the Jāṭ-s and their resistance to Maḥmūd's army show that they possessed considerable power. "From a passage quoted by M. Reinaud [Mémoire sur l'Inde, p. 272] from the Kámilu-t-Tawáríkh (416 H.), it appears that they had invaded the principality of Mansúra and forced the Musalmán Amír to abjure his religion." Nizāmud-dīn tells us that Maḥmūd mobilised fourteen hundred boats, each having twenty archers, against the Jāṭ-s. The whole account smacks of unreality. As Sir H M Elliot points out,

It is also remarkable that Mahmúd should choose to fight at all on the river, when his veteran troops would have been so much more effective on land than on water.³⁹

The boats of the Jāṭ-s are said to have overturned on their first impact with the projected spikes of Maḥmūd's boats. But as Muḥammad Nāzim points out —

It is difficult to understand how they could overturn the boats of the enemy without overturning their own boats.⁴⁰

Gardīzī, after describing the riverine conflict, only mentions about 'one camp of the refugee families' whom the Muslim army robbed. "From there the Muslim army left with flying colours for Ghazni."41

By giving these instances of intense resistance offered by the Indian people to Maḥmūd, I have not the slightest intention of belittling the great military skill

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Nāzim, Muḥammad. The Life and Times of Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghazna. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931. p. 122, fn.

⁴¹ Studies in Medieval Indian History, p. 32

displayed by Maḥmūd during his repeated invasions of India, all of whom were carried out with remarkable ability and success.

Never was the Mussulman hero dismayed by the inclemency of the seasons, the height of the mountains, the breadth of the rivers, the barrenness of the desert, the multitudes of the enemy, or the formidable array of their elephants of war. The sultan of Gazna surpassed the limits of the conquests of Alexander...⁴²

Thus the victories of Maḥmūd mark him out as one of the greatest generals that have appeared on the world arena. But this very fact serves to heighten the effect of the brave resistance of the Hindus, who succumbed only to one of the greatest leaders produced by the Turkish race.

But even their victorious enemies were constrained to admit the military qualities of the Hindus. "Though zealous for Islam he [Maḥmūd] maintained a large body of Hindu troops, and there is no reason to believe that conversion was a condition for their service." According to Muḥammad Nāzim,

There was a large number of Hindūs in the Sulṭān's army and they lived in a separate quarter of <u>Gh</u>azna. Al-Ma'arrī, Risālatu'l-<u>Gh</u>ufrān, p. 153, describes the scene of a Hindū woman's satī in <u>Gh</u>azna. 44

⁴² Gibbon, Edward. The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (The 'Chandos Classics' edition). Vol. 4. London: Frederick Warne and

Co., 1883. pp. 165-66 43 The Cambridge History of India. Vol. 3, Turks and Afghans. Ed. Haig, Wolseley. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928. p.

²⁷ 44 Nāzim, Muḥammad. The Life and Times of Sulṭān Maḥmūd of <u>Gh</u>azna. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931. p. 140, fn.

Hardly two months after Mahmūd's death, his son Mas'ūd dispatched Sewand Rāi (perhaps a corruption of Samant Rai), a Hindu chief, with a contingent of Hindu horsemen, in pursuit of the nobles supporting the cause of his brother. "In a few days a conflict took place, in which Sewand Rái and the greatest part of his troops were killed; but not till after they had inflicted a heavy loss upon the opponents."45

We hear of another "...general of the Hindús,"46 Sundar by name, after whom was appointed Tilak, to lead the contingent of the Hindus. Tilak, the son of a barber, had risen to eminence even in Mahmūd's time. He was an accomplished man, having command over both Hindi and Persian, written as well as spoken. Around 1034 CE, Mas'ūd "...promoted Tilak, and granted him a gold embroidered robe, hung a jewelled necklace of gold round his neck, and placed an army under him... A tent and umbrella were also given to him. Kettle drums were beaten at his quarter according to the customs of Hindú chiefs."47

Soon, the revolt of talented Ahmad Nīāl-tigīn, Governor of Punjab, provided Tilak with an opportunity to prove his worth. While none among the Muslim officers dared to proceed against Nīāl-tigīn, Tilak offered his services to Mas'ūd. "...Tilak, in full confidence and power, pursued Ahmad with a large body of men, chiefly Hindús..."48 Ahmad kept flying before Tilak, who persuaded his men to desert.

⁴⁵ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 60 (Citing the Tarik-us-Subūk-tigin of Abu'l-Fadl Muhammad ibn Husayn al-Bayhaqi)

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 128

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 128-29

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 132

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...a severe engagement ensued, when Ahmad, not able to stand his ground, was defeated and took to flight...49

Lahore was easily occupied and then Tilak wrote letters to Hindu Jāṭ-s, offerings them a reward of 5,00,000 dirhams for bringing Aḥmad's head. The strategy proved successful and the Jāṭ-s fell upon Aḥmad's men, cut off his head, captured his son and "...immense wealth fell into the hands of those Jats." 50

Aḥmad's head and his son were surrended by Jāṭ-s to Tilak in consideration of 1,00,000 dirhams. Tilak presented his prizes to Mas'ūd at Marv [in Khurāsān] and was rewarded with further favours.

The services of the Hindus continued to be prized in the times of Maudūd, Mas'ūd's successor, who ruled from 1040 to 1049 CE. When Abū 'Alī Ḥasan, the kotwāl of Ghaznī was deputed to command the army in India, he sent "...a letter to Bíjí Ráí, a general of the Hindús, who had done much service even in the time of Mahmúd, inviting him to return to Ghazní, whence he had fled on account of some political dissensions, and had taken up his abode in the mountains of Kashmír."51

Resistance to Ghaznavide Invasions After Mahmūd

The effects of Maḥmūd's invasions on India's political destiny should not be minimised. No doubt, most of his invasions were mere plundering expeditions which drained India of enormous wealth. This, in itself, was of no great consequence. But the annexation of Punjab

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 133

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 60

in the Ghaznavide kingdom and the extermination of the Shāhi-s who had so long acted as a bulwark against the foreign aggressor, created a permanent danger for India's security. Unless this crack was quickly filled up, it was only a matter of time before the Islamic flood would overhelm the country as a whole.

Were the Indians alive to this danger during the one and three-quarters of a century which elapsed between the last invasion of Maḥmūd and the installation of a Muslim Sultanate in North India? There was no dearth of great military leaders in North India during this period. Karṇa of the Kalacuri-s, Bhoja of the Paramāra-s, Govinda-candra of the Gāhaḍavāla-s, Jaya-siṃha Siddha-rājā and Kumāra-pāla of the Caulukya-s, and Vigraha-rājā IV of the Cāhamāṇa-s — all of them were powerful enough to overthrow the Ghaznavide domination of the Punjab, particularly when the latter was almost perpetually plagued by internal dissensions and external aggression in the northwest.

In the whole period, there is but one instance in 1043 CE, when the Indian chiefs organised a confederacy under the Tomara king of Delhi, Mahī-pāla, against the Ghaznavides.

The Paramāra Bhoja, the Kalachuri Karṇa and the Chāhamāna Aṇahilla were probably among these who formed the confederacy.⁵²

Firişta gives the following account of this concerted action:

In the year 435 [1043 CE], the Raja of Dehly [Delhi], in conjunction with other rajas, retook Hansy [Hansi],

⁵² Ganguly, D C. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 94

Tahnesur [Thanesar], and their dependencies, from the governors to whom Modood [Maudūd] had entrusted them. The Hindoos from thence marched towards the fort of Nagrakote [Kangra], which they besieged for four months; and the garrison being distressed for provisions, and no succours coming from Lahore, was under the necessity of capitulating. The Hindoos, according to their practice, erected new idols, and recommenced the rites of idolatory...⁵³

The success of the Raja of Delhy gave such confidence to the Indian chiefs of Punjab (the province through which the five branches of the Indus flow), and other places, that though before this time, like foxes, they durst hardly creep from their holes, for fear of the Mussulman arms, yet now they put on the aspect of lions, and openly set their masters at defiance. Three of those Rajas, with 10,000 horse and an innumerable army of foot, advanced and invested Lahore. 54

From Firista's account an inference can be drawn that while the conquest of Nagarkot [Kangra] and other places was the achievement of confederate forces, the investiture of the fort of Lahore was the work of merely the "...chiefs of Punjab (the province through which the five branches of the Indus flow), and other places..." Due to the desperate and sudden attack of the Muslims, the siege of Lahore came to nought but the Indians retained hold over Nagarkot, Hānsī, and other places for a considerable period of time.

But for this concerted attack, we look in vain for a renewal of the attempt to remove the vestiges of foreign rule, which could any time engulf India. At best

⁵³ Tārīķ-i-Firișta, p. 118

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 119

⁵⁵ Ibid.

it can be claimed that the Indian chiefs contained the Muslim aggression for about one and three-quarters of a century more and successfully repulsed all attempts—and they were not inconsiderable in number—made by the later Ghaznavide rulers to extend their dominions in India.

Abu'l-Faḍl al-Bayhaqī [in his Tārīķ-us-Subūk-tigīn] tells us that in the year 424 H. (1033 CE), Aḥmad Nīāl-tigīn, the Commander of Hindustān, "...marched out with his warriors and the army of Lahore, and exacted ample tribute from the Thákurs. He crossed the river Ganges and went down the left bank. Unexpectedly (ná-gáh) he arrived at a city which is called Banáras, and which belonged to the territory of Gang [i.e., the Kalacuri king Gāṅgeya-deva]. Never had a Muhammadan army reached this place. The city was two parasangs [leagues] square, and contained plenty of water. The army could only remain there from morning to midday prayer, because of the peril. The markets of the drapers, perfumers, and jewellers, were plundered, but it was impossible to do more."56

It was a mere daring plundering raid and he was not allowed more than a few hours' stay at Benares.

The date of Nīāl-tigīn's Benares expedition almost concides with the date (14th June 1033 CE), assigned for the death of Sālār Mas'ūd, the mythical hero, at Bahraich. He is said to be the son of Sālār Sāhū and Maḥmūd's sister, Mamal [Sitr-i-Mu'alla]. 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Chishtī, who wrote his work Mir'āt-i Mas'ūdi in Jehāngīr's reign, on the basis of "...an old book written by Mulla Muhammad Ghaznawí. This man was servant of Sultán Mahmúd Subuktigín. He was also in

⁵⁶ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, pp. 123-24

the service of Sálár Sáhú..."⁵⁷ He describes the death of Sālār Mas'ūd in great detail. Simply because he is a later writer, it is not proper to dismiss his account as mere fiction; "...his incidents seem to be borrowed rather than invented..."⁵⁸ Baranī refers to the existence of a mausoleum at Bahraich "...of Sayyid Salar Mas'ud who 'was a soldier in the army of Sultan Mahmud."⁵⁹ Sālār Mas'ūd can be held up as a typical example of numerous soldiers of fortune who might have tried to emulate the feats of Maḥmūd but were swallowed up in the popular upsurge against foreign intrusions. A few extracts from the *Mir'āt-i Mas'ūdi* will illustrate the extent of this Indian fervour –

Several other chiefs also came to visit him [Sālār Sāhū], though they did not relinquish their opposition. After their defeat they wrote to all the Ráis round, saying, "This is the land of our fathers, and ancestors, which this boy wants to take from us by force. You had better come speedily to our assistance, or we shall lose our country."

...In two months all the Ráis of the Hindu Koh and the countries round assembled with innumerable forces, and encamping on the bank of the river Kahsala, sent one to tell Mas'úd that "if he wished to save his life, he had better leave that country and go elsewhere, as the land belonged to their fathers and ancestors, and they were determined to drive him from it."

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 513

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 515

⁵⁹ Tārīkh-i-Firoz Shāhi of Zia-u'd-din Baranī. Ed. Khan, Sayyid Ahmad. Calcutta: Bibliotheca Indica, 1862. p. 491.

Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961) on p. 77 in fn. 2

The army of the enemy was innumerable, like mountains on every side; so that although numerous forces fought in the army of Islam, they were mown down like so much grass. Many of the greatest nobles met their deaths. In the course of that day, from morning till evening prayer, two-thirds of the army were slain, leaving but one-third to mourn their loss. Still, through the power of the love of God, none thought of flight...

Meanwhile, the Ráí Sahar Deo and Har Deo, with several other chiefs, who had kept their troops in reserve, seeing that the army of Islám was reduced to nothing, unitedly attacked the body-guard of the Prince...It was then, on Sunday, the 14th of the month Rajab, in the aforesaid year 424 (14th June, 1033), as the time of evening prayer came on, that a chance arrow pierced the main artery in the arm of the Prince of the Faithful. His sun-like countenance became pale as the new moon...

After the death of Mas'úd, Muzaffar Khán died also. The unbelievers drove his descendants from Ajmír [Ajmer], and re established their idols; and idolatory again reigned over the land of India. 60

After the raid of Aḥmad Nīāl-tigīn in 1033 CE, for sometime, we do not hear of any Muslim campaign against Hindustān. The cause is not far to seek. Bhoja Paramāra and Karņa Kalacuri occupied a dominant position in North India. The capture of Thanesar, Hānsī, and Nagarkoṭ in 1043 by their federated armies had stunned the Yamīnī-s. But after the death of Bhoja in 1055 and Karṇa in 1072, we hear once again of the

⁶⁰ Mir'āt-i Mas'ūdi of 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Chishtī. Tr. Chapman, R B. History of Ghazni. Ed. Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1958. pp. 105-44 [Also appears in Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, pp. 513-44]

repeated attempts of the Yamīnī Sultāns to penetrate into the interior of India. Sultān Ibrāhīm, who ascended the throne of Ghaznī in 1059 also secured his kingdom from Saljūq attacks by arranging the marriage of his son, Mas'ūd III with Mahd-i-'Irāq ('cradle of Iraq'), the sister of Saljūq emperor Sultān Sanjar.⁶¹

For these invasions of Sultān Ibrāhīm, who ruled from 1059 to 1099 CE, and those of his son Maḥmūd who was appointed Governor of Punjab in 1075, as also the invasions of Mas'ūd III, 1099 to 1115, we are indebted to Dīwān-i-Salmān of Khwājah Mas'ūd bin Sa'd bin Salmān, who was a court poet of Bahrām Shāh of Ghaznī and died in 1121.

Firişta informs us that Ibrāhīm conquered the fort of Ajodhan (Pakpattan) in 1079 CE. 62 After that he conquered Tabarhinda (modern Sirhind), Buria (modern Burya on the river Yamunā in Ambola), and the territory "...from Dhangán to Jálandhar."63 Ibrāhīm's son, Maḥmūd, who had been appointed Governor of Punjab raided Agra. Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān gives a graphic account of the fight of Maḥmūd with Jaya-pāla, the ruler of Agra. "The fort of Ágra is built amongst the sand, like a hill, and the battlements of it are like hillocks. No calamity had ever befallen its fortifications, nor had deceitful Time dealt treacherously with it."64 After several days of fierce fight, the fort of Agra was at last conquered. Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān further sings,

⁶¹ Khan, Ghulam Mustafa. 'A History of Bahrām Shāh of Ghaznīn.' Islamic Culture. Vol. 23, No. 1/2. Hyderabad: The Islamic Culture Board, 1949. p. 64

⁶² Tārīķ-i-Firişta, p. 139

⁶³ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 4, p. 520 (Citing the Dîwān-i-Salmān of Khwājah Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān)

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 522

Now do the kings from all quarters send their presents unto thee—loads of red gold, and files of male elephants. As so many elephants are collected, make their stables at Kanauj, and appoint Chand Ráí to take charge of them. 65

Perhaps Maḥmūd found an ally in Kanauj named 'Chand Rāi,' who is apparently Candra-deva of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty. The inscriptions after 1090 CE, refer to a tax called '*Turuṣkan-daṇḍa*.' It was either a tax on the people realised by the Gāhaḍavāla-s to meet the expenses of resisting the Muslims⁶⁶ or it was utilised by them to pay annual tribute to the Ghaznavide Sultāns. If Candra-deva really entered into some sort of alliance with Maḥmūd and derived some political benefit out of it, the latter view will seem preferable.⁶⁷

But there are serious objections to this viewpoint. The question naturally arises why should Govinda-candra and Vijaya-candra, both of whom claim repeated victories over the Muhammadans, continued to pay the tax.⁶⁸ Both D R Bhandarkar⁶⁹ and Sten Konow⁷⁰ express

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 524

⁶⁶ Smith, Vincent A. The Early History of India. Fourth edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924. p. 400, fn. 1

⁶⁷ Ganguly, D C. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 51

⁶⁸ See the article by R S Awasthy and A Guha. Journal of Indian History. Vol. 15, No. 3. Madras: The Diocesan Press, 1936. p. 171 69 Bhandarkar, Devadatta Ramakrishna. 'Slow Progress of Islam Power in Ancient India: Part II.' Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Vol. 11, No. 2. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

search Institute, 1930. p. 138
70 Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 9. Eds. Hultzsch, E and Konow, Sten. Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1907-8. p. 321

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the view that it was a tax levied on the Muslim settlers in the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom. This view seems to be most acceptable.

Maḥmūd next invaded Ujjain. Dīwān-i-Salmān sings,

On this journey thy army destroyed a thousand idoltemples, and thy elephants trampled over more than a hundred strongholds. Thou didst march thy army to Ujjain; Málwá trembled and fled from thee.⁷¹

Lakṣma-deva, the Paramāra ruler of Ujjain, seems to have inflicted a crushing defeat on this occasion upon Maḥmūd, as evidenced by his Nāgpur stone inscription.⁷²

Maḥmūd also invested the fort of Kāliñjar ruled by Candela Kīrti-varman. Here too, no success is recorded by the court-poet [Salmān], who merely says –

On the way to Kálanjár, thy pomp obscured the light of day. The lip of infidelity became dry through fear of thee, the eye of plural-worship became blind. All the people felt alarm at thy army, and regarded it as the approach of the day of judgment.⁷³

The mere safe return of the prince from Hindustān must have been a welcome sight for Ibrāhīm and the feelings are reproduced by the court-poet,

Thanks to the incomprehensible God, that the Amír and Sháh of Hindustán, the Sword of State and Religion, the honour of our faith, Prince Mahmúd, son of Ibráhím,

⁷¹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 4, p. 524 (Citing the *Dīwān-i-Salmān* of Khwājah Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān)

⁷² Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 2. Ed. Burgess, J A S. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1894. p. 181

⁷³ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 4, p. 524 (Citing the Diwan-i-Salman of Khwajah Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salman)

has returned from Hindustán to the Sultán, the just lord of the world.⁷⁴

According to the Muslim historians, Ibrāhīm's successor Mas'ūd III, who ruled at Ghaznī from 1099 to 1115, also invaded Hindustān. He took Mulhī, the king of Kanauj, prisoner. Mulhī is evidently Madana-candra (also known as Madana-pāla), who succeeded Candra-deva sometime before 1104. Since his first inscription bears that date, or it might also refer to Madana-pāla, the local Rāṣṭrakūṭa chief of Kanauj, a feudatory of the Gāhaḍavāla-s. According to the Dīwān-i-Salmān,

Kanauj was the capital of Hind, which the infidels regarded as their pole-star. Its story is not concealed, for it was the Ka'ba of the Samanís, and Kibla of the infidels. The treasures of Hind were collected in it, just as all rivers flow into the sea. Mulhí had soldiers, wealth, elephants, and arms: conceive therefore what else he had. He had taken possession of Hind by force.⁷⁵

The Rāhan inscription of Madana-pāla⁷⁶ (Madana-candra) Gāhaḍavāla speaks of Govinda-candra, the son of Madana-candra, as having defeated the Muslims again and again, while still a prince. It is not unlikely that he forced Mas'ūd to release his father.⁷⁷

After the death of Mas'ūd III, the Muslim chroniclers are almost silent about any further invasions of Hindustān by the Ghaznavide rulers. During his long

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 525

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 526

⁷⁶ The Indian Antiquary. Vol. 18. Eds. Fleet, John Faithfull and Temple, Richard Carnac. Bombay: British India Press, 1889. p. 16 77 Ganguly, D C. 'The Historical Value of Dīwān-i-Salmān.' Islamic Culture. Vol. 16, No. 4. Hyderabad: The Islamic Culture Board, 1942. pp. 426–27

reign (1118–52), Bahrām Shāh more often came to India as a fugitive to escape the fury of the Shansabānī princes of Ghor [Ghūr]. Only once, during the early years of his reign, did Bahrām come in strength to Punjab, but only to punish the rebellious Governor of the Punjab, Muḥammad Bāhlīm. Bāhlīm seems to have displayed great energy in subduing minor Hindu chiefs on the border of the Punjab and he established himself in Nagaur, situated some 300 miles south of Lahore. Bāhlīm "...deserves to be remembered, because he established Muhammadan rule over provinces which had never acknowledged the authority of the greatest of the Ghazanvids."⁷⁸

The feebleness of the last three rulers of the Ghaznavides, Bahrām Shāh (r. 1118-52), Khusrau Shāh (r. 1152-60), and Khusrau Malik (r. 1160-86), and their pre-occupation with the Turkomans and the Shansabani-s of Ghür seems to have provided the Indian chiefs with an opportunity to wipe off the isolated pockets of Muslim rule in the interior. The Hindu sources of various Rājpūt dynasties speak again and again of the rout of the Turuska armies. These may refer either to the failure of the feeble attempts which might have still been made by the Yamini kings to extend their dominions in India or to the extermination of the isolated pockets of Muslim domination beyond the Punjab. One of these was at Nagaur, which, as earlier pointed out, was established by Bāhlīm, the rebellious Governor of Bahrām Shāh.79 This perhaps was wiped off by the

⁷⁸ The Cambridge History of India. Vol. 2, Turks and Afghans. Ed. Haig, Wolseley. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925. p. 36

⁷⁹ The Țabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj. Tr. Raverty, H G. London: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873. p. 110 [Translated from the original Persian chronicle. —Ed.]

Cāhamāṇa ruler, Arṇo-rājā80, who seems to have ruled from 1133 to 1151.

Early in Arno-rājā's reign, these Muslim invaders seem to have advanced as far as Ajmer. The Prthvi-raja-vijaya speaks of the decisive defeat of the Turuska army.81 The Yamini Commander fled before the Cauhāṇa-s. Many Muslim soldiers died of exhaustion and an equal number perished of thirst. Their bodies lay along the path of retreat and were burnt by the villagers. A large amount of booty fell into the hands of Arno-rājā which consisted largely of horses. The Cauhāna praśasti [line 15] of the Ajmer Museum states -

The land of Ajmer, soaked with the blood of the Turuskas, looked as if it had dressed itself in a dress of deep red colour to celebrate the victory of her lord.82

Arno-rājā is said to have afterward purified the place, by constructing a lake on the battlefield by diverting the waters of the river Candra, which rises in Puşkarāranya [in modern-day Rajasthan].

The reign of Arno-rājā's son Vigraha-rājā IV (also known as Viśāla-deva), whose known dates of reign are 1153 to 1164, coincides with the rapid decline of the Ghaznavide power under the weak administration of Khusrau Shah (r. 1152-60) and Khusrau Malik (r. 1160-86).

⁸⁰ Arņo-rājā belonged to the line of Cāhamāṇa-s known in the Skanda-purāņa as 'Śākambhara-sapāda-lakṣa,' i.e., a territorial unit supposed to have 1,25,000 villages; Minhāj-i-Sirāj refers to this unit as 'Siwalikh.' See pp. 11-12 of Dasharatha Sharma's Early Chauhān Dynasties (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1959).

⁸¹ Prthvi-rāja-vijaya of Jayānaka, canto 6, lines 1-27

⁸² Cited by Dasharatha Sharma in Early Chauhan Dynasties (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1959) on p. 44 in fn. 9.

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With the conquest of Delhi and Hānsī from the Tomara-s, Vigraha-rājā's dominions spread northwards and brought him into repeated conflicts with the Yamīnī-s of Ghaznī and Lahore. His repeated victories led him to claim of "...having rendered Aryavarta worthy of its name by the repeated extermination of the Mlechhas." All territories south of the river Sutlej [Śatadru] seem to have been freed from the Muslim rule.

The struggle continued in the reign of Pṛthvī-rājā II (known dates c. 1168–69). With a view to check the inroad of the Muslims, he had the important fort of Hānsī strengthened and put in charge of his maternal uncle, Kilhaṇa. The flag on the *pratolī* or the gateway, we are told, "...set Hammīra as it were at defiance." Verse 11 of the Hānsī stone inscription "...refers to his having burnt Paṃchapura [identified with Panchpattan on the Sutlej], and captured but not killed its lord." Kilhaṇa's adversary on this occasion seems to have been the last ruler of the Yamīnī-s, Khusrau Malik.

The last important ruler among the Cāhamāṇa-s of Śākhāmbharī is the famous Pṛthvī-rājā III, who ruled from 1177 to 1192. But the story of his struggle against the Muslim invaders really belongs to Chapter 6, Resistance to the Ghorides.



⁸³ The Indian Antiquary. Vol. 19. Eds. Fleet, John Faithfull and Temple, Richard Carnac. Bombay: British India Press, 1890. p. 219 84 The Indian Antiquary. Vol. 41. Eds. Temple, Richard Carnac and Bhandarkar, Devadatta Ramkrishna. Bombay: British India Press, 1912. p. 17 ('Hānsī Inscription')

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 18

Raids of Muslims – Mostly Unrecorded by Muslim Historians but Referred to in Sanskrit Inscriptions

SCLUSIVE DEPENDENCE ON Persian and Arabic sources for an account of Muslim invasions is apt to produce an unbalanced view. The basic prejudices of the Muslim historians—who mostly belonged to the *Ulemã* class—against other religions, make them reject any other account, however authentic, if it tends to subvert their basic belief in the might of Islam. The victories of the armies of Islam have been elaborately described while the reverses have either been conveniently omitted or painted as having ended in negotiations and tribute. Even when described, only minor details are made available.

It is here that the value of indigenous Sanskrit records becomes apparent. Alexander Dow, perhaps the earliest British historian of India, wrote in his work of the eighteenth century,

The Mahommedans know nothing of the Hindoo learning: and had they even any knowledge of the followers of Brimha [possibly Brahman], their prejudices in favour of the jewish fictions contained in the Koran, would make them reject accounts, which tend to subvert the system of their own faith. The Shanscrita [Sanskrit] records contain accounts of the affairs of Western Asia [and Ancient India], very different from what any tribe of the Arabians have transmitted to posterity: and it is more than probably, that upon examination, the former will appear to bear the marks of more authenticity, and of greater antiquity than the latter [the writings of the Arab and Persian historians.]¹

Unfortunately, authentic Sanskrit historical works for our period are very few in number. Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅginī is perhaps the only truly historical work in Sanskrit language. Pṛthvī-rāja-vijaya of Jayānaka is another very reliable work. The wealth of information provided by Pṛthvī-rāja-vijaya regarding the defeat of the Turuṣka army in the reign of the Cāhamāṇa ruler, Arṇo-rājā, has been noticed in the previous chapter.

However, fortunately, there is a wealth of indigenous material in the shape of Sanskrit inscriptions available to us in the Epigraphia Indica, The Indian Antiquary, D R Bhandarkar's Inscriptions of Northern India, Reports of the Archaeological Survey of India and Archaeological Survey (Western Circle), etc.

It is not within the scope of the present work to discuss each and every inscription containing references to the Muslim invasions. The following is only a selective list of those Sanskrit inscriptions which help us to reconstruct the history of the vicissitudes faced by the Muslim forces during their Indian invasions. It is precisely on these occasions when the Muslim chroniclers are either silent or found wanting in details.

¹ Dow, Alexander. The History of Hindostan. Vol. 1. London: T Becket and P A De Hondt, 1770. p. IV ('Preface')

Inscription No. 1

Navsāri Grant of Pulakeśin, the Cālukya Chieftain of Gujarat²

The Navsāri grant of Pulakeśin, the Cālukya chieftain of Gujarat (Lāṭa-deśa) and the Viceroy of the Cālukya King Vallabha of Bādāmi, mentions the defeat of the Tājika (Arab) army when it came to subdue the Navasārikā country (Vadodara) after defeating many Indian kings –

...परममाहेश्वरः परमभट्टारकः शरझः सीरमुद्गरोद्गारिणि³ तरलतर-तारतरवारिदा⁴रि[तोदित]सैन्धवकच्छेल्लसौराष्ट्र[चा]वोटकमौर्य-गूर्ज्जरा[दि]राजे निःशेषदाक्षिणात्यक्षितिपतिजि[गी]ष[या दक्षिणा-पथप्रवेशा]भिलाषीणि ॥ प्रथममेव नवसारिकाविषयप्रसाधनायागते... समरशिरसि विजिते ताजिकानीकं शौर्य्यानुरागिणा श्रीवल्लभनरेन्द्रेण प्रसादीकृतापरनामचतुष्टयस्तद्यथा दक्षिणापथसाधारचलुक्किकुलालंका रपृथिवीवल्लभानिवर्त्तकनिवर्त्तयित्रवनिजनाश्रयश्रीपुलकेशिराज...

The illustrious king Avanijanāśraya Pulakeśin Śarajha, the great lord and devotee of Maheśvara, whom the illustrious King Vallabha, appreciating his valour, favoured with the four following titles – 'the solid pillar of the Deccan' [Dakṣṣṇā-patha-sādhāra], 'the ornament of the

² Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era. 'Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum' (Vol. 4, Part 1). Ed. Mirashi, Vasudev Vishnu. Ootacamund: Government Epigraphist for India, 1955. pp. 140-41, lines 23-25, 33-35.

See Verhandlungen des VII Internationalen Orientalisten-Congresses [Transactions of the 1888 Oriental Congress held at Vienna], Arische Section [Oriental Section], pp. 211 ff. and Journal of Indian History. Vol. 15, Part 2. Madras: The Diocesan Press, 1936. pp. 162-63

^{3 [}Pandit Bhavanlal Indraji reads it as "शरझः सीरमुद्रशेद्रारिणि" while Vasudev Vishnu Mirashi gives "शरझिषरमुद्रशेद्रारिणि" where jhaṣira is taken to be from the root 'jhaṣ' meaning 'to hurt.' —Editor]

⁴ Mirashi's edition says that "तरस्रतरतारतरवारिदा" appears erroneous and the correct reading might be "तारतरासिदारितोदित"

Calukki (Cālukya) dynasty' [Calukki-kula-alaṃkāra], 'the lord [beloved] of the Earth' [Pṛthivī-vallabhā], and 'the repeller of the unrepellable (Arabs)' [Anivarttaka-nivarttayitṛ] when the Tājika army, which vomitted forth arrows and maces, which destroyed by its brightly glittering sharp swords, the prosperous Saindhava (Sindh), Kacchela (Cutch), Saurāṣṭra (Gujarāt), Cavoṭaka, Maurya, and Gūrjara kings and others — and wishing to enter the Deccan with a view to conquering all the Southern kings, came to the first instance to reduce the Navasārikā country.

This is perhaps the ealiest reference to a Muslim invasion in India in a Sanskrit inscription. In this Navsāri grant of the Cālukya prince Pulakeśin Avani-janāśraya dated 738 CE we are told that an Arab (Tājika) army, after destroying the kings of Sindh, Kutch, Saurāṣṭra, Cavoṭaka, Maurya (probably small kings of Rājpūtāna), and Gurjara kings, on their way to the Deccan advanced as far as the Navasārikā country (situated in Lāṭa).

The Muslim historian al-Balādhurī confirms the truth of the above statement. Al-Balādhurī says that Junaid [Junayd bin 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Murrī], who was Governor of Sindh during the Caliphate of Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik (r. 724–43 CE), organised regular incursions into the inland parts of India. After conquering al-Kirāj [Kutch], Junayd dispatched one force against Marmad [Maru-māda], Maṇḍal, Dahnaj, and Barus [Broach or Bharuch]. Another force was dispatched against Uzain [Ujjain] and the country of Māliba (Malwa)⁵. Junaid personally conquered al-'Bailamān and

⁵ The Origins of the Islamic State. Part 2. Tr. Murgotten, Francis Clark. New York: Columbia University, 1924. pp. 226–27 [Translation of the Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhuri. —Ed.]

Jurz, which stand for Bhilmāl and the Gurjara country. Xuanzang speaks of the Gurjara kingdom, which comprised Northern Gujarat and the southern half of Rajputana, with its capital at 'Pi-lo-mo-lo,' which is obviously Bhilmāl.⁶ Barus (Broach) represents the extreme southern limit of the Arab penetration. When the Arab army tried to advance further south, it was signally defeated by Pulakeśin.

Thus the gates of the Deccan were effectively guarded by Pulakeśin's defeat of the Arab army, which was looked upon by Indians as anivartaka or unrepellable. In recognition of Pulakeśin's services, King Vallabha conferred upon the former the titles of 'the solid pillar of Deccan' and 'the repeller of the unrepellable.'

Inscription No. 2

The Gwalior (Sāgar-Tāl) Stone Inscription of Bhoja Pratihāra⁷

Bhoja's Gwalior inscription says about Nāga-bhaṭa l, the founder of the Gurjara-Pratihāra dynasty –

...येनासौ सुकृतप्रमाथिव(ब)लवन्से च्छाधिपाक्षौहिणीः शुन्धान(स्)स्फुरदुग्रहेतिरुचिरे(रै) होंभिंश्चतुर्भिर्व्वभौ ॥ 4

...having crushed the large armies of the powerful Mlechcha king, the destroyer of virtue, he shone with four arms

7 Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 18 (1925–26) Ed. Sastri, H Krishna and Sastri, Hirananda. Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Recognition Reco

tion Branch. p. 107, v. 4

⁶ Bhandarkar, Devadatta Ramakrishna. 'Slow Progress of Islam Power in Ancient India.' Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Vol. 10, No. 1/2. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1929. pp. 29–30

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brilliant on account of the glittering terrible weapons.8

This inscription of the Gurjara-Pratihāra king Bhoja I, tells us that Nāga-bhaṭa I, the founder of the dynasty, who probably ruled in Avantī (Malwa) in about 725 CE, defeated the army of a powerful *mleccha* [foreign] ruler, who invaded his dominions. The accounts of Arab travellers testify to the enemity of the kings of Jurz [Gurjara-deśa] towards the Arabs.9

Thus the Arab invasion of Sindh was not a 'mere episode' in the history of India. It was followed by determined attempts on the part of the Arabs to extend their dominance over the interior of India. Their advance towards the south was blocked by Pulakeśin and towards the west, it was resolutely checked by Nāga-bhaṭa I, the Pratihāra ruler of Avantī. Al-Balādhurī also admits that whereas other places were conquered by the Arabs, they merely made incursions against Ujjain. It is in fact a tacit admission that the Arabs failed in their expedition against Ujjain.

R C Majumdar is of the opinion that this success of Nāga-bhaṭa I must have increased his power and prestige, and he extended his kingdom by annexing many of the territories earlier overrun by the Arabs. Al-Balādhurī also informs us that under Tamīm, the weak successor of Junaid, the Arabs "...retired from several parts of India and left some of their positions..." 10

⁸ Ibid., pp. 110-11

⁹ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 1. London: Trübner and Co., 1867. p. 4

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1]

¹⁰ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 126

Inscription No. 3

The Gwalior (Sāgar-Tāl) Stone Inscription of Bhoja Pratihāra11

Verse 11 of the Gwalior inscription mentioned above says about the Gurjara-Pratihāra ruler, Nāga-bhata II (r. 815-33 CE) -

आनर्त्तमालविकरातत्ररुष्कवत्स-मत्स्यादिराजगिरिदुर्गाहठापहारैः । 11

...by his forcible seizure of the hill forts of the kings of ānaratta, Mâlava, Kirâta, Turuṣka, Vatsa and Matsya. 12

In the ninth century CE, the Gurjara-Pratihāra-s came to hold the whole of North India "...from the Karnal district in the Punjab to the Vindhyas and from North Bengal to the Kathiawar peninsula."13 Al-Mas'ūdi who visited India in 915-16 CE, speaks about the Bauüra (Pratihāra) king of Kanauj,

This king has four armies, according to the four quarters of the wind. Each of them numbers 700,000 or 900,000 men. The army of the north wars against the prince of Múltán, and with the Musulmans, his subjects, on the frontier. The army of the south fights against the Balhará, king of Mánkir. The other two armies march to meet enemies in every direction. 14

¹¹ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 18 (1925-26) Ed. Sastri, H Krishna and Sastri, Hirananda. Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch. p. 108, v. 11

¹² Ibid., p. 112

¹³ Ray, Hem Chandra. The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol.

^{1.} New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1931. p. 10

¹⁴ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 23

Al-Mas'ūdi leaves us in no doubt that the Bauüra (Pratihāra) king of Kanauj was among the foremost enemies of Islam. But for the support of Balharā (Vallabha-rājā), the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king of Mānyakheṭa (Mānkīr), the traditional rivals of the Gurjara-Pratihāra-s, the latter might have wiped off the Arab rule in Sindh. In spite of it, al-Mas'ūdi informs us that the Pratihāra-s often marched against Mūltān and only when the Muslims threatened to break their idol did they withdraw.

Inscription No. 4

Dholpur Inscription of Caṇḍa-mahāsena, the Cāhamāṇa ruler of Dhavalapuri¹⁵

The Dholpur inscription of Caṇḍa-mahā-sena, the Cāhamāṇa king of Dhavalapuri (identified with the modern Dholpur, Rajasthan), dated 842 CE says about the ruler –

चम्मैन्वतीतटद्वयसंस्थितस्रेच्छाधिपाः प्रवरस्र्राः । इप्सितणा प्रनता सेवां कुर्व्वन्ति यस्यानु ॥ 17

Whom the brave Mleccha lords, living on both banks of the river Carmanvati [Chambal] serve, bowing down. 16

The inscription records the consecration of the temple of Caṇḍa-svāmin, together with a pond and a well. The date of the consecration is Vikrama Saṃvat 898 (842 CE). Caṇḍa-mahāsena appears to be a feudatory prince. Possibly he acknowledged the sovereignity of

¹⁵ Hultzsch, E. 'Ueber eine Sammlung indischer Handschriften und Inschriften.' Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft. Vol. 40, No. 1. Leipzig: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1886. p. 41, v. 17 16 [Hultzsch translates it as: "Die an beiden Ufern der Charmanvati residirenden, tapferen Mlechchha-Fürsten erwiesen ihm Verehrung." – Ibid., p. 38. —Ed.]

the Pratihara emperor, Bhoja, who had captured Kanauj some time before 836 CE. It is difficult to identify the mleccha lords, but Hem Chandra Ray suggests that it is possible that there were, during that period, some Arab settlements in the Chambal valley [in modern Madhya pradesh] as a result of a long series of Arab raids from the lower Indus valley.17

Inscription No. 5

Undated Mahoba Inscription of Kirti-varman Candela18

This Mahoba inscription says about Dhanga of the Candela Dynasty [of Jejākabhukti] -

निर्मितवैरिभङ्गः श्रीधङ्ग इत्यवनिमङ्गलमाविरासीत् ।

सारेण यः स्वभुजयोर्भुवनातिभारं हंवीरमप्यतिवलं तुलयांचकार ॥ 17

There appeared a blessing for the earth, called the illustrious Dhanga, who caused the destruction of his enemies and who, by the strength of his arms, equalled even the powerful Hamvîra, who had proved a heavy burden for the earth. 19

Dhanga's reign lasted from 954 to 1002 CE. Hence he was the contemporary of Subūk-tigin (r. 977-997), and Mahmud (r. 998-1030), and the inscription might be interpreted to mean that the Candela ruler was involved in some fight with either of the two. The verse may refer to Jaya-pāla's second attack on Subūk-tigīn, when according to Firista, the former organised a con-

19 Ibid., p. 218

¹⁷ Ray, Hem Chandra. The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol.

^{2.} New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1936. p. 1059, fn. 4 18 Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 1. Ed. Burgess, J A S. Calcutta: Superintendent of Co. tendent of Government Printing, 1892. p. 221, v. 17 [Hereafter referred to as: Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1]

federacy of the leading Rājās of Delhi, Ajmer, Kāliñjar, and Kanauj²⁰ to destroy the alien invader. The Kāliñjar ruler, referred to by Firiṣta, must be Dhaṅga. E Hultzsch also remarks,

That Dhanga was far from victorious is indirectly confirmed by the subjoined inscription, which says only that he 'equalled' but not that he conquered Hambira. 21

'Hammīra' or 'haṃvīra' is obviously the Sanskrit equivalent of Arabic title al-'Amīr.

Hem Chandra Ray, however, gives a different interpretation to the epithet 'equalled even the valorous Hamvira.' In his opinion, it does not refer to a conflict which resulted in Dhanga's defeat. He says that the Mahoba inscription is unfortunately fragmentary and undated but in verse 28 it seems to refer to the son of Kirti-varman (Vikrama Samvat 1154) [c. 1097 CE]. Hence it seems to be the work of some late praśasti-kāra, writing at least a hundred years after Dhanga's death. The defeat of the Shāhi-s had left open the Gangā-Yamunā valley to the inroads of the Yamînî 'Amīr-s. Hence the comparison of Dhanga's prowess to that of the terrible Hamvira might have appeared as the highest tribute to Dhanga's power. If Dhanga really fought and was defeated by the Hamvira, we should expect a discreet silence from the poets living at the court of his successors. 22

[Hereafter referred to as: Tarik-i-Firişta]

²⁰ Briggs, John. History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India Till the Year A.D. 1612. Vol. 1. Calcutta: R Cambray & Co., 1908. p. 18 [Translated from the original Persian treatise Tāriķ-i-Firişta of Muhammad-Kāsim Hindu-shāh Astarābādī "Firişta."—Ed.]

²¹ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, p. 219

²² Ray, Hem Chandra. The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol. 2. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1936. pp. 682-83

Inscription No. 6

Udaipur Inscription of the Paramāra-s of Malwa²³

The Udaipur [Vidisha district, Madhya Pradesh] inscription of the Paramara-s of Malwa says about Bhoja, the famous king of the dynasty, who ruled from 1015 to 1052 CE -

चेदीश्वरेन्द्ररथ[तोग्म]ल[भीममु]ख्यान्-कर्णाटलाटपतिगूर्ज्जरराट्तुरुष्कान् । यद्भत्यमात्रविजितानवलो[क्य] मौला दोष्णां वलानि कलयंति न [योद्ध|लो कान्] ॥ 19

Seeing the Karnâtas, the lord of Lâta, the king of Gurjara, the Turushkas, the chief among whom were the lord of Chedi, Indraratha, Toggala(?) and Bhîma, conquered by his mercenaries alone, his hereditary warriors [maula] thought only of the strength of their arms, not of the numbers of fighters. 24

The defeat of the Turuska-s might refer to an engagement of Bhoja with the forces of Mahmud of Ghaznī. Probably during Mahmūd's expeditions to Gwalior and Kāliñjar, which ended in failure, Bhoja met and defeated some detatchement of the Ghaznavide Sultan. It is one more illustration of a reverse of Muslim arms, ignored by the contemporary Muslim historians. Toggala, who is referred to in the verse as having been defeated by Bhoja might be a Ghaznavide general.25 Georg Bühler too expresses the same opinion,

The expeditions of Mahmud of Ghazni against Somnāth and later against Gwalior may very probably have

²³ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, p. 235, v. 19

²⁴ Ibid., p. 238

²⁵ Bhatia, Pratipal. The Paramars (c. 800-1305 A.D.). New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1970. p. 83

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forced Bhoja to fight against him. 26

However, the verse may as well refer to the defeat sustained by the forces of Yamini ruler of Ghazni in 1043 CE. In that year according to Firișta, "...the Raja of Dehly, in conjuction with other rajas..."27 liberated Hānsī, Thanesar, and Nagarkot and pushed back the frontiers of the Ghaznavide kingdom across the Rāvī [Paruṣṇi]. The Paramāra king, Bhoja, might have been a member of this confederacy.

Inscription No. 7

Nāgpur Stone Inscription [c. 1104 CE] of Nara-varman, brother of Laksma-deva Paramāra of Malwa²⁸

The Nagpur Inscription of Nara-varman, says about his brother Laksma-deva of the Paramara dynasty of Malwa, whose known dates are 1087 to 1097 -

खेलोत्खाततुरुष्कदत्तविलसद्दाहावलीवेश्लन-क्राम्यत्कुङ्कमकेसराधिकमृदौ वंक्षुपकण्ठस्थले । येनावास्य सरस्वतीसविधतासाधिक्यवाक्पाटव-श्चाटूनुत्कट[प]त्रिपञ्चरगतः कीराधिपोध्याप्यत ॥ 54

Being encamped on the banks of the Vankshu, which were even softer than nature made them because the saffron-filaments on them were withering under the rolling of the teams of frisky horses, presented by the Turushka whom he had eradicated with ease, he taught the Kîra chief to utter most flattering speeches, who on account of the proximity of the Sarasvatî was eloquent beyond measure, and who was like a parrot shut up in a big cage.29

²⁶ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, p. 231

²⁷ Tārīk-i-Firista, p. 118

²⁸ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 2. Ed. Burgess, J A S. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1894. p. 188, v. 54

²⁹ Ibid., p. 194

DR Bhandarkar likens the language of this inscription to Kālidāsa's description of Raghu's exploits in the Raghu-vaṃśa. It may not have been possible for Lakṣma-deva to advance up to the river Oxus (Vaṅkṣu). But as Franz Kielhorn points out that Vaṅkṣu might have been a branch of the Gaṅgā, the inscription does point out to some great victory of Lakṣma-deva over the Turuṣka-s. As already seen in the previous chapter, during the reign of Ibrāhīm of Ghaznī (r. 1059–99 CE), his son Maḥmūd, who was appointed Governor of Punjab during 1075–99, made repeated incursions into the Gaṅgā-Yamunā valley.

Inscription No. 8

Badāun Stone Inscription of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Lakhana-pāla [Lakṣaṇa-pāla] of Vodamāyuta³²

The Badāun [Budaun, Uttar Pradesh] inscription of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Lakṣaṇa-pala of Vodamāyuta (Badāun), says about Madana-pāla, the sixth of the line of Rāṣṭrakūṭa-s of Kanauj —

यत्पौरुषात्प्रवरतः सुरसिन्धुतीरहर्म्वी(म्बी)रसङ्गमकथा न कदाचिदासीत्॥

...in consequence of whose distinguished prowess [Madana-pāla] there was never any talk of Hambîra's coming to the banks of the river of the Gods [i.e. Gaṅgā]. 33

³⁰ Bhandarkar, D R. Appendix to Epigraphia Indica (Vols. 19–23). Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1929. p. 27, fn. 8 [This work is often referred to as 'List of Inscriptions of Northern India.' —Ed.] or branch of the Ganges." — Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 2, p. 194, fn. 81 32 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, p. 64, line 4

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Madana-pāla, the local Rāṣṭrakūṭa ruler of Kanauj, was feudatory of Govinda-candra, the Gāhaḍavāla ruler (r. 1114–54) and the contemporary of Mas'ūd III, the Yamīnī king who ruled from 1099 to 1115. He is perhaps the same ruler of Kanauj whom the poet Salmān designates as Mulhī. The frequency of Muslim raids during Mas'ūd's reign is recorded also by Minhāj who writes,

...Ḥājib Ṭughā-Tigīn crossed the river Gang [Gaṅgā], in order to carry on a holy war in Hindūstān, and penetrated to a place where except Sulṭān Maḥmūd, no one had reached so far with an army before.³⁴

The inscription seems to belie the story of successes of Muslim armies during the reign of Mas'ūd III, narrated by the court poet and the Muslim historians.

Inscription No. 9

The Rāhan (Etawah district) Inscription [c. 1109 CE] of Madana-pāla Gāhaḍavāla³⁵

The Rāhan inscription of Madana-pāla (or Madana-candra) Gāhaḍavāla (r. 1104-14) says that his son, Govinda-candra defeated the Muhammadans even as a prince –

हम्मीरं न्यस्तवैरं मुहुरसमरणऋीडया यो विधत्ते। 9

... again and again by the play of his matchless fighting

³⁴ The Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj. Tr. Raverty, H G. London: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873. p. 107 [Translated from the original Persian chronicle.—Ed.]

[[]Hereafter referred to as: *Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri* of Minhāj-i-Sirāj] 35 *The Indian Antiquary*. Vol. 18. Eds. Fleet, John Faithfull and Temple, Richard Carnac. Bombay: British India Press, 1889. p. 16, line 9

[Govinda-candra] makes the Hammîra lay aside (his) enmity...³⁶

The grant testifies to the fact that Govinda-candra who ruled from 1114 to 1154, achieved a number of victories against the Muslims while still a prince. The inscription almost certainly refers to the expedition sent by the Ghaznavide king Mas'ūd III, who ruled from 1099 to 1115, against Kanauj. At first its king Mulhī or Madana-pāla suffered reverses and they "...placed chains on his feet and a collar on his neck." But soon, Govinda-candra retrieved the situation and hurled back the Muslim armies.

This also testifies to the intensity and frequency of the inroads of the Turuṣka-s. These inroads continued in the times of Govinda-candra (r. 1114–54), who was ably assisted in his fight against the invaders by his vassal, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa chief Madana-pāla (of the Badāun inscription). The immunity from Muslim danger secured by Govinda-candra for his kingdom was so effective that he gained fame as the incarnation of Hari.

Inscription No. 10

Sarnath Inscription of Kumāra-devī, the Buddhist wife of Govinda-candra Gāhaḍavāla³⁸

Kumāra-devī's inscription contains the genealogy of the Gāhaḍavāla family, to which her husband belonged.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 18

³⁷ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 4. London: Trübner and Co., 1872. p. 526

³⁸ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 9. Eds. Hultzsch, E and Konow, Sten. Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, Thoracon 224, v. 16

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 9]

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First of all it speaks of Candra, the Candra-deva of Govinda-candra's inscriptions. His son was Madana-candra also known as Madana-pāla, who again was the father of Govinda-candra, who is said to have saved Benares from the wicked Turuṣka-warrior —

वाराणसीं भुवनरक्षणदक्ष एको दुष्टान्तुरुष्कसुभटादिवतुं हरेण । उक्तो हरिस्स पुनरत्र वभूव तस्मा-द्रोविन्दचन्द्र इति [वै?] प्रथिताभिधानः ॥ 16

Hari, who had been commissioned by Hara in order to protect Vârânasî from the wicked Turushka warrior, as the only one who was able to protect the earth, was again born from him, his name being renowned as Govindachandra.³⁹

Govinda-candra ruled from 1114 to 1154. The inscription tells us that he saved Vārāṇasī [Benares] from the Turuṣka-s. No other contemporary historian speaks of any Muhammadan expedition against Vārāṇasī during this period. Sten Konow is of the opinion that Muslim settlers remained in the country about the Yamunā from the days of Maḥmūd of Ghaznī and down to the end of the twelfth century. "...It seems probable that Govindachandra took some action against such settlers, and the term turushkadanda [Turuṣka-daṇḍa], which occurs in many of his and his predecessors' inscriptions, gives us a hint as to the nature of this action." "11"

³⁹ Ibid., p. 327

⁴⁰ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 2. London: Trübner and Co., 1869. pp. 250 ff.

⁴¹ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 9, p. 321

The information given by the inscription seems to disprove the view that the aforesaid tax was a sort of tribute paid by the Gāhaḍavāla rulers to the Ghaznavide kings. It was in reality a tax on the Muslim settlers in the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom. The exact nature of this tax, however, remains unascertained.

Inscription No. 11

Benares Copper-plate Grant of Jaya-candra Gāhaḍavāla [1168 CE]⁴²

The Benares copper-plate grant of Jaya-candra has the following verse about Vijaya-candra of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty who ruled from 1155 to 1170 –

...भुवनदलनहेलाइर्म्यइम्मीरनारी-नयनजलद्धाराधौतभूलोकतापः ॥ 9

...He [Vijaya-candra] swept away the affliction of the globe by the streams (of water flowing as) from clouds from the eyes of the wives of Hammîra, the abode of wanton destruction to the earth.⁴³

Muslim historians refer to no expedition against the rulers of Kanauj during this period. But this inscription probably contains yet another reference to a conflict of the Gāhaḍavāla-s with the forces of either of the last two Yamīnī kings of Ghaznī and Lahore, viz., Khusrau Shāh (r. 1152–60) or Khusrau Malik (r. 1160–86), left unrecorded by Muslim historians.

⁴² The Indian Antiquary. Vol. 15. Eds. Fleet, John Faithfull and Temple, Richard Carnac. Bombay: Education Society's Press, 1886. p. 7, v. 9

⁴³ Ibid., p. 9

Inscription No. 12

Delhi-Siwalik Pillar Inscription of Viśāla-deva Cāhamāṇa of Śākambharī⁴⁴

The Delhi-Siwalik pillar inscription of Vigraha-rājā IV (r. 1153-64), also known as Viśāla-deva, dated Vikrama Saṃvat 1220 (1164 CE), thus speaks of the achievements of the Cāhamāṇa ruler –

आर्यावर्तं यथार्थं पुनरपि कृतवान् स्रेच्छविच्छेदनाभिनुर्देवः शाकंभरीन्द्रो जगती विजयते विसलक्षोणिपालः ॥

By repeatedly exterminating the mlecchas, having once more made Āryāvarta what its name signifies, victorious in the world is the lord, the guardian of the earth Visala, ruler of Śākambhari.

This inscription is inscribed on the pillar known as Fīrūz Shāh's Lāṭ, which the Sultān reportedly removed from the foot of the Siwalik mountains. It shows that by 1164 CE, the Cāhamāṇa dominions had spread northwards up to the Himalayan foothills and they might have conquered the territories lying between the Yamunā and the Sutlej. This must have brought Vigraha-rājā IV into repeated conflicts with the Yamīnī-s of Ghaznī and Lahore. The inscription, therefore, naturally speaks of his repeated victories over the Turuṣka-s and the *mlecchas*. The Yamīnī power under the last two Sultāns, Khusrau Shāh and Khusrau Malik was rapid-

⁴⁴ Inscriptions of Haryana. Ed. Phogat, S R. Kurukshetra: Vishal Publications, 1978. p. 37, Third Inscription, lines 3-4 [First published by Franz Kielhorn - 'Delhi Siwalik Pillar Inscription of Visaladeva; the Vikrama year 1220.' Indian Antiquary. Vol. 19. Eds. Fleet, John Faithfull and Temple, Richard Carnac. Bombay: British India Press, 1890. pp. 210-19 —Ed.]

ly declining and the Cāhamāṇa-s of Śākambharī began the expansion of their power towards the Punjab under Vigraha-rājā IV.

Inscription No. 13

Hānsī Stone Inscription of Pṛthvi-rājā II45

The Hānsī stone inscription dated *Vikrama Saṃvat* 1224 (c. 1168 CE), says that Pṛthvī-rājā II (r. 1168–70) of the Cāhamāṇa dynasty, entrusted to his maternal uncle Kilhaṇa the fort of Āsikā (Hānsī) to keep out the Hammīra –

मत्वा हम्मीरवीरं निखिलवसुमतीशल्यभृतं प्रभृतं योग्योसौ वीरगोष्टीनिपु[णत]रमतिः शत्रुलक्ष्मीभुजङ्गः। प्रादाद्राजन्यचूडामणिकिरणगणासंजनिद्धृतपादो भूपस्तस्मै प्रदृष्टो विशदगुणनिधेरासिकादुर्गमुग्रम्॥ 4

...thinking of Hammîra who had become the cause of anxiety to the world, the king put Kilhana in charge of the fort of Âsikâ, doubtless Hânsî. 46

The object of this inscription was probably to record that Kilhaṇa erected a pratoli or gateway. The flag on the pratoli we are told, set Hammīra as it were at defiance. The inscription later on compares Kilhaṇa with Hanūmān and Pṛthvī-rājā to Rāma. Verse 11 refers to his having burnt Pañcapura [identified with Panchapattan or Pakpattan of modern-day Pakistan], and captured but not killed its lord.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ The Indian Antiquary. Vol. 41. Eds. Temple, Richard Carnac and Bhandarkar, Devadatta Ramkrishna. Bombay: British India Press, 1912. p. 19. v. 4

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 17

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 17-18

Inscription No. 14A

Sundhā Hill Inscription of the Naddūla Cāhamāṇa-s⁴⁸

This inscription is on two stones found on the Sundhā hill about ten miles north of Jaswantpura in Jodhpur. It was composed by (Jain) Sūri Jaya-maṅgala and its primary object is to glorify the Cāhamāṇa chief Chāchiga-deva, during whose reign it was composed [i.e. Vikrama Saṃvat 1319 / c. 1262 CE]. Verse 34 of the inscription speaks of Kilhaṇa as having defeated the Turuṣka-s and having constructed a golden gateway –

निर्भिद्योचैः प्रव(ब)लकलितं यस्तुरुष्कं व्यथत्त श्रीसोमेशास्पदमुकुटक्तोरणं काञ्चनस्य ॥ 34

[Prince Kilhana] after destroying the Turushka erected a golden torana, 'like a diadem for the abode of the holy Someśa'...⁴⁹

In 1178, Mu'izz al-Dīn [Muḥammad Ghūri] advanced from Mūltān through Rājpūtāna on his way to Gujarat. *Prthvī-rāja-vijaya* actually states that before the Muslim invader was defeated by the Gujarat king he took possession of Naddūla.⁵⁰ Evidently then, Kilhaṇa might have recovered his capital after defeating the hosts of Mu'izz al-Dīn when the latter was disastrously defeated by Mūla-rājā II of the Caulukya dynasty. Firiṣta also informs us that the army of Mu'izz al-Dīn

⁴⁸ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 9, p. 77. v. 34

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 72

⁵⁰ Sarda, Har Bilas. 'The Prithvîrāja Vijaya.' Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland. Vol. 45, No. 2. London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1913. p. 279 [The tenth canto (sarga) of the Prthvî-rāja-vijaya says, "When these fiends in the shape of men (Mlechhas) took possession of Nadūl (Nadole), the warriors of Prithvîrāja took up their bows and the emperor became angry and resolved to lay Ghori's glory to dust." (Ibid.) —Ed.]

"...suffered many hardships in their retreat, before they reached Ghizny [Ghaznī]."51

Inscription No. 14B

Sundhā Hill Inscription of the Naddūla Cāhamāṇa-s⁵²

In verse 36 of the same Sundhā hill inscription, Kîrti-pāla, the brother of Kilhaṇa, is reported to have defeated a Turuṣka army at Kāsahrada –

...तस्मिन्कासहदे तुरुष्कनिकरं जित्वा रणप्राङ्गणे। 36

...at Kâsahrada [Kilhaṇa's brother Kirti-pāla] routed an army of the Turushka...⁵³

Kāsahrada has been identified with the village Kayadram [Kyara, Sirohi district, Rajasthan] at the foot of Mt. Ābū. Merutuṅga refers to it as Gāḍarāraghaṭṭa ', where the battle between Mu'izz al-Dīn and Mūla-ra-jā II took place. Both Kilhaṇa and Kīrti-pāla were the feudatories of the Caulukyan sovereign and must have participated in the battle of 1178; hence it is natural for them to take the credit of winning the battle.

Inscription No. 15

Dabhoi (Darbhavatī) Inscription [dated 1253] of Lavaṇa-prasāda of Caulukya Vāghelā Dynasty⁵⁵

The Dabhoi inscription speaks thus of Lavaṇa-prasāda of the Vāghelā dynasty, a feudatory of the Cauluk-

⁵¹ Tārīķ-i-Firișta, p. 170

⁵² Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 9, p. 77, v. 36

⁵³ Ibid., p. 72

⁵⁴ The Prabandhacintāmani or Wishing-stone of Narratives. Tr. Tawney, C H. Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1901. p. 154 [Translated from the original Sanskrit work of Merutunga Ācārya. —Ed.]

⁵⁵ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, pp. 26-27, vv. 15-17

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yan king Bhîma II (1178–1241 CE). The 'praśasti' was composed by Someśvara, the famous contemporary poet –

15. How many godlike kings are there not on earth? But even all of them became troubled by the mere mention of the king of the Turushkas. When that (Turushka king), excessively angry approached in order to fight, [it was Lavaṇa-prasāda] who placed only.....

16. By whom (Lavaṇa-prasāda), the king of the Turush-kas.....who had spattered the earth with the blood flowing from the cut-off heads of numerous kings—when he came in front, with dry lips, full of doubt—was conquered at Stambha with his arm (strong) like a post (stambha) and terrible through the sword.

17.If he (Lavaṇa-prasāda) is a mortal, how is it that he conquered the lord of the Mlechchhas?⁵⁶

This inscription speaks about an encounter of Lavana-prasada, a ferudatory of the Caulukyan king Bhi-

ma II with the Turușka king. The encounter took place at Stambha (identified by Georg Bühler with Stambhapura or Stambha-tīrtha), the modern Khambat (Cambay). The earlier three encounters between the Muslims and the Gujarati forces which took place in 1178, 1195, and 1197, had all taken place in Southern Rajputana. The first two had resulted in the defeat of the Muslims, while the third had led to a temporary occupation of Anhilvāda by the Muslims. But the encounter referred to in the Dabhoi inscription refers to a different period. As pointed out by Bühler, most probably it happened after the occupation of Anhilvada in 1178. Some time later, the Gujarati forces inflicted a crushing defeat on the Muslims and drove them out of the province. The Muslim historians are silent about the events but the inscription does contain an allusion to them. It might be that Lavaṇa-prasāda liberated Gujarat from the Muslim forces of occupation.

Inscription No. 16

Verawal Inscription of Caulukya king Bhima II [Śridhara's Devapaṭṭaṇa Praśasti]⁵⁷

The Verawal inscription of the Caulukya king Bhīma II who ruled from 1178 to 1241 CE, speaks of Śrīdhara, the Governer of Devapaţţaņa –

प्रलयजलिधवेलोल्लोलकल्लोललेलं ८८८८८ - - - ८ संपिष्टशैलं। दलितधरणिचकं वीरहंमीरचकं वहुतृणमकरोद्यः श्रीधरो दुर्गदर्पः॥ 43

Śrîdhara, the pride of the fort [or "he whose pride was the fort"], made like to much grass the host of heroic

⁵⁷ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 2, p. 445, v. 43

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Hammira, that moved like the high rising waves of the ocean which on the dissolution of the world inundate the shores,—that smashed the hills by the impetus of the mere movement of its feet and that split in twain the circle of the earth. ⁵⁸

This Verawal inscription should be read together with the previous Dabhoi praśasti of Lavaṇa-prasāda. As mentioned earlier, Bhīma's long rule witnessed three major invasions of Gujarat by the Muslims in 1178, 1195, and 1197. The first two ended in disasters for the Muslims while the third led to a temporary occupation of Nahrwāla (Aṇhilvāḍa) by the Muslims. Nizāmu'd-Dīn Ḥasan Nizāmī [in his Tāju'l Ma'āsir] states that –

...the kingdom of Gujarát, which is "a separate region of the world," came under the dominion of the Musalmáns, "and high and low were treated with royal benignity and justice."⁵⁹

Firişta also states that Qutb al-Din "...took the city of Nehrwala, where he left an officer with a strong garrison."60

How and when this army of occupation was driven out of Gujarat is nowhere mentioned by Muslim historians. It is precisely here that these two inscriptions of Dabhoi and Verawal refer to the heroic struggles of the two generals of the Caulukya king: Lavaṇa-prasāda and Śrīdhara. Perhaps they retired to their fortified places and from there waged constant struggle till the Muslim forces were driven away from the whole of Gujarat.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 439

⁵⁹ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 2. London: Trübner and Co., 1869. p. 230

⁶⁰ Tārīķ-i-Firișta, p. 197

Inscription No. 17

Kānāi-baḍaśī (Gauhāti) Inscription [1206 CE]61

The Kānāi-baḍaśī (Gauhāti) inscription speaks about a Turuṣka invasion of Assam on the thirteenth day of Caitra in Śaka Saṃvat 1127 [Mahā-mahopād-hyāya Padmanath Bhattacharyya calculates this to be 7th March 1206 CE]. It says that the Turuṣka-s on coming to Assam were completely annihilated —

शाके तुरगयुग्मेशे मधुमासत्रयोदशे। कामरूपं समागत्य तुरुष्काः क्षयमाययुः॥

In Śāka (expressed by) Horse, Two and Īśa (horse = 7, Two = 2, Īśa = 11, i.e., 1127) on the 13^{th} of the month of Madhu (i.e. Caitra), the Turuṣkas obtained annihilation on arriving in Kāmarupa.⁶²

The date corresponds to 7th March 1206, which is confirmed by Minhāj's account of the disaster met by Bakhtiyār Khaljī's army while returning from a Tibetan expedition. The rock inscription is situated as a place called Kānāi-baḍaśī-bāoā, about a mile northeast from the northern bank of the Brahmaputra, opposite the east-end of the town of Guwahati in Assam. As Nalinikanta Bhattasali points out, the site of the inscription opposite modern Guwahati confirms that the encounter between the forces of Kāmarūpa and the retreating Turkish army took place near the record site.

Thus the date of Bakhtiyār's invasion of Assam can now be definitely ascertained. Minhāj refers to the Tibetan expedition of Bakhtiyār Khaljī and says that

⁶¹ Bhattasali, Nalinikanta. 'Muhammad Bakhtyar's Expedition to Tibet.' The Indian Historical Quarterly. Vol. 9, No. 1. Ed. Law, Narendra Nath. Calcutta: Calcutta Oriental Press, 1933. p. 49 62 Ibid.

while returning from his unsuccessful Tibetan expedition through the kingdom of "...the Rāe of Kāmrūd [Rājā of Kāmarūpa]...,"⁶³ he was surrounded by the Hindus of the country. They reached the open plains, closely pursued by the Hindus. The Muslims were driven into the river, where they all perished with the exception of Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī and "...a few horsemen, a hundred more or less...; and all the rest were drowned."⁶⁴

The site of the encounter proves that Bakhtiyār penetrated deep into Kāmarūpa to provoke the king of Kāmarūpa. The inscription clearly says, "Kāmarūpa samāgatya" – "Having arrived in Kāmarūpa." On his onward march when the king had learnt that Bakhtiyār was proceeding to Tibet and not Kāmarūpa, the king had even offered to accompany the Muslim invader into Tibet, if he would come again next year in proper time and with necessary equipments. Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī had not paid any heed to this advice.

Inscription No. 18

The Madanpura Inscription of Viśva-rūpa-sena and the Edilpur Inscription of Keśava-sena⁶⁵

The almost identical Madanpura grant of Viśva-rūpa-sena and Edilpur grant of Keśava-sena, both sons of

⁶³ Țabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, pp. 560-72

⁶⁵ The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Ed. Prinsep, James. Vol. 7, Part 1. Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1838. p. 45 [First publication of the Edilpur Copper-plate Grant. —Ed.]

Banerji, R D. 'Edilpur Grant of Kesavasena.' Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. New Series. Vol. 10 (1914). Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1918. pp. 97-104 [Edited and revised version of the grant. —Ed.]

Lakṣmaṇa-sena of the Sena dynasty, who was defeated by Bakhtiyār Khaljī, contain the following line –

...पृथिवीमिमां प्रथितवीरंवर्गाग्रणीः सगन्धप(य)वनान्वयप्रस्रयकास्रुद्रो नृपः॥ 21

He (the raja) who was like Rudra in Pralaya (the end of a Kalpa) and born from the race named Gandhapavana [corrected to 'Gandha-yavana'] and the first of those who were praised by the famous heroes, governed this earth...⁶⁶

As both the brothers granted land in the same area, it is likely that the one succeeded the other. The Edilpur grant of Keśava-sena contains several additional verses, consequently it might be stated that Viśva-rūpa-sena was Keśava-sena's predecessor. It can thus be affirmed that the successors of Lakṣmaṇa-sena not only continued to rule over large parts of Bengal for a long time, but they also successfully repulsed the subsequent intrusions of the Muslims. These inscriptions confirm the statement of Minhāj that "...[Lakṣmaṇa-sena's] descendants, up to this time, are rulers of the country of Bang [East Bengal]."67

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⁶⁶ The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Ed. Prinsep, James. Vol. 7, Part 1. Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1838. p. 49 67 Ṭabaṣāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 558

Resistance to the Ghorides

THE TASK OF establishing a sovereign Muslim State in North India was ultimately accomplished by the third great Muslim invader of India viz., Mu'izz al-Dīn (also called Shihāb ad-Dīn) Muḥammad bin Sām Ghūrī, who began his conquest of India in the last quarter of the twelfth century CE. What the boundless enthusiasm of the early Arab invaders could not accomplish and while all that the fanatical zeal of Maḥmūd could gain permanently in India was its border province of the Punjab, Islam was installed as a ruling force in India by the race of Shansabānī Turks, whose own conversion to Islam "...was still incomplete and whose forte was the sword."1 To the Turk, "...Islam was only a weapon, a weapon of decoration and of offence. It raised his status as a member of the most progressive world community and opened the way to power and to riches..."2

The province of Ghūr according to Minhāj was bounded by "...five great and lofty mountains [or 'mountain ranges'] in Ghūr, respecting which the

¹ Habibullah, A B M. The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1945. p. 2 2 Ibid., p. 3

people of Ghur are agreed that they are the strongest mountains in the world."3 These geographical features led to her political and cultural seclusion from the rest of the world. Minhāj says that it was during the Caliphate of 'Alī, that Ghūr was conquered and converted to Islam.4 But due to its geographical situation it did not remain under Muslim control. As late as tenth century CE and even later, when all the surrounding regions were Muslim, Ghür continued to be "...for the most part heathen..."5 Even in the twelfth century, when Ghiyāş ad-Dīn and Shihāb ad-Dīn ascended the thrones of Ghur and Ghazni respectively, according to Minhāj, they were not orthodox Muslims but Kirāmīs [also called Mujassamiān, 'the corporealists'].6 The Kirāmia sect was "...a half-way house between Islam and popular Buddhism."7 Minhāj further states that when Shihāb ad-Din ascended the throne of Ghazni, he found that the citizens of the region believed in Imām Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān, so he got himself converted to the Ḥānafi School of Sunni Law.

The early history of this unorthodox Shansabānīan dynasty is somewhat obscure. The first ancestor of this

³ The Țabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj. Tr. Raverty, H G. London: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873. p. 318 [Translated from the original Persian chronicle. —Editor]

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj]

⁴ Ibid., p. 302

⁵ Barthold, W. Turkestan: Down to the Mongol Invasion. Second edition. Tr. Gibb, H A R. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928. p. 338 [Translated from the Russian writings of Wilhelm Barthold (Vasily Vladimirovich Bartold). —Ed.]

⁶ Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 384

⁷ Prof. Mohammad Habib's Introduction to Elliot and Downson's History of India as Told by its Own Historians. Vol. 2. Aligarh: Cosmopolitan Publishers, 1952. p. 94

dynasty is claimed to be Zuhak [a legendary king from Persian mythology], whose descendants settled in the inaccessible valley of Ghūr. Shansab, after whom the dynasty is named, was a descendant of Zuhak.

The Shansabānī-s came into prominence during the reign of Bahrām Shāh of Ghaznī (r. 1118–52). Bahrām Shāh treacherously murdered Quṭb al-Dīn Ḥasan, a Ghoride prince, whose brother, Sayf al-Dīn Sūrī invaded and captured Ghaznī for the first time in 1148 CE, and assumed the title of Sultān. Bahrām Shāh, however, soon returned and brutally murdered Sayf al-Dīn. The youngest of the Ghoride brothers, 'Alā'ud-Dīn took a vow of avenging the wrong done to his brothers. Bahrām Shāh was defeated in 1151 and fled to India where he soon afterwards died, and was succeeded by his son, Khusrau Shāh. 'Alā'ud-Dīn burnt ruthlessly the city of Ghaznī for seven days and seven nights. This act of arson earned him the title of Jahān-sūz (lit. 'world-burner').

Alauddin Jahansuz gave imperialistic ambitions and expansionist zeal to the Shansabanis...⁸

After the death of 'Alā'ud-Dīn and that of his son, Sayf al-Dīn Muḥammad, the next heirs to the throne were the two nephews of 'Alā'ud-Dīn – Ghiyāsu-d-Dīn, who ruled over Ghūr from 1163 to 1203 CE and Shihāb ad-Dīn, who later on took the title of *Mu'izz al-Dīn* when he was installed as the ruler of Ghaznī, which was wrested from the hands of the Ghuzz Turks in 1173 CE.

⁸ The Delhi Sultanat (A.D. 1206-1526). 'A Comprehensive History of India' (Vol. 5). Eds. Habib, Mohammad and Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1970. p. 155

Under these two brothers, according to Wilhelm Barthold, the Ghoride kingdom rose "...to the rank of a world power." Thus, while the senior branch of the Ghorides looked for expansion towards Khurāsān, the Ghaznī branch looked towards India for its expansion. Both the brothers used the title of Sultān. In practice, Shihāb ad-Dīn always recognised his elder brother as his sovereign and never undertook any campaign without his brother's permission. As Prof. Habib points out,

Behind the Ghorian empire there was no imperial idea, no conception of kingdom, state or even government of any sort. Historical parallels are dangerous, but if we ignore mere difference in size, the institution that approaches the Shansabaniah kingdom most closely is the joint family system of the Hindus. 10

Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad bin Sām, an intensely practical man and possessing immense capacity to adjust his plans according to the needs of the time, began his conquest of India in 1175 CE. It will not be correct to say that the Indian kings were taken unawares by the Ghoride armies. Ever since the occupation of Punjab by the Ghaznavides, more than one and a half centuries earlier, the Turkish danger of expansion into the interior of India had always been present and the Rājpūt kings individually had been taking steps to meet this

⁹ Barthold, W. Turkestan: Down to the Mongol Invasion. Second edition. Tr. Gibb, H A R. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928. p. 338 [Translated from the Russian writings of Wilhelm Barthold (Vasily Vladimirovich Bartold). —Ed.]

^{10 &#}x27;Sultan Shahabuddin of Ghur.' Aligarh Muslim University Journal, No. 1, January 1930, p. 34.

Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961) on p. 32.

danger. Muslim poets of the later Ghaznavide period – Sayyid Ashraf Ḥasan bin Muḥammad Ḥusayn, Khwājah Mas'ūd bin Sa'd bin Salmān, Abul-Majd Majdūd ibn Ādam Sanā'ī, and others speak about incursions into India, which had become a regular feature of the later Ghaznavide era. Sanskrit epigraphic evidence, quoted in the previous chapter, also throws considerable light on the ever-increasing concern of the Hindu States at the Turkish inroads and the steps taken by them to keep the terrible *Hammīra* [from the Arabic 'Amīr] at bay.

Thus the political situation in India faced by Muhammad Ghūrī was far different from that faced by Mahmud of Ghaznī a century and three-quarters earlier. The latter had met with dogged resistance only from one quarter – the Shāhi-s of Punjab. By sheer brilliance of armed strategy, he had vanquished all opposition before him, though he too had his moments of anxiety at Kāliñjar and Somnath.¹¹

In the last quarter of the twelfth century, however, there were three powerful dynasties in North India – all equally powerful and fully alive to the danger of the Turuṣka invasion. These were the Caulukya rulers of Gujarat, Mūla-rājā II (r. 1176–78) and Bhīma II (r. 1178–1241); the Cāhamāṇa ruler Pṛthvī-rājā III (r. 1177–92) of Delhi and Ajmer; and the Gāhaḍavāla ruler Jaya-candra (r. 1170–94) of Kanauj. Each one of them was powerful enough to drive back the Turkish invaders. Mūla-rājā II drove Muḥammad Ghūrī back in the year 1178. Pṛthvī-rājā III drove him back in 1191. But no two would combine against the common foe.

Muḥammad Ghūrī too was fully alive to the strength of the forces opposing him and unlike Maḥmūd of Ghaznī, he relied more on stratagems than on the strength of

¹¹ See supra Chapter 4. Resistance of the Ghaznavides

arms to gain victories against his adversaries. ¹² The "... first individual of this (Ghoride) family who received the title of Sultán..." had styled himself as 'Sayf al-Dīn Sūrī.' The father of Ghiyāth al-Dīn [Ghiyāsu-d-Dīn] and Mu'izz al-Dīn [Mu'izzu-d-Dīn], who had been placed in charge of Ghūr by Sayf al-Dīn had also styled himself as Bahā' al-Dīn Sūrī. ¹⁴ The shrewdness and clever machinations displayed by Mu'izz al-Dīn in his Indian expeditions can only be compared to those displayed by another Sūrī, Shershāh, three and a half centuries later.

Muḥammad Ghūrī started his Indian conquests through the Gomal pass and not through the Khyber, because the former was the safer and shorter route. He easily wrested Mūltān from the Qarāmiṭah [Qarmatian] chiefs in 1175 CE. Next he turned his attention to Ūch. Firiṣta¹⁵, who obviously bases his account on ibn-i

^{12 [}Sita Ram Goel writes, "The theologians of Islam had laid down, in the opening years of this imperialist ideology, that the kāfirs who could not be subdued by force should be subverted by fraud. The prophet of Islam had himself initiated the first lessons in this lore when he practised what came to be known as Siyasat-i-Madīnah in later times, that is, to take the kāfirs one by one and that too when they are least expecting an attack. One of his famous sayings, sanctified as his Sunnāh, was that "war is perfidy." This hadīs came in handy to Muizzuddin Muhammad bin Sam..." - p. 27 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) —Ed.]

¹³ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 2. London: Trubner and Co., 1869. p. 291 (Citing the Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj) [Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2] 14 Ibid.

¹⁵ Briggs, John. History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India Till the Year A.D. 1612. Vol. 1. Calcutta: R Cambray & Co., 1908. p. 169 [Translated from the original Persian treatise Tārīķ-i-Firiṣta of Muḥammad-Kāsim Hindu-shāh Astarābādī "Firiṣta"] [Hereafter referred to as: Tārīķ-i-Firiṣta]

Asīr¹⁶ ['Alī ibn al-Athīr], describes that Mu'izz al-Dīn intrigued with the wife of the Bhaṭṭī Rāi of Ūch and promised to marry her if she poisoned her husband. "She declined the honour for herself but secured it for her daughter, caused her husband to be put to death, and surrendered the city."¹⁷

Resistance Offered by the Caulukya-s of Gujarat

In 1178 CE, Mu'izz al-Dīn marched though Mūltān and Ūch by way of Western Rajputana to Gujarat. He thus tried to repeat the exploits of Maḥmūd to obtain the temple treasures of Gujarat in 1026. Had this invasion been successful, Muḥammad Ghūrī would have become the master of entire Southern Rajputana and Gujarat. With this base he might have easily attacked either the Ghaznavides of Lahore or the Cāhamāṇa-s of Śakambharī [who were] ruling in Delhi and Ajmer. But his defeat at the hands of Mūla-rājā II of Gujarat in 1178 compelled him to change his plans completely.

Minhāj writes that in the year 574 H (1178 CE),

...he [Mu'izz al-Din] conducted his army by way of Uch

¹⁶ The Delhi Sultanat (A.D. 1206–1526). 'A Comprehensive History of India' (Vol. 5). Eds. Habib, Mohammad and Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1970. p. 156, fn. 2 17 The Cambridge History of India. Vol. 3. Ed. Haig, Wolseley. Cambridge: University Press, 1928. pp. 38–39 (Sir Wolseley Haig goes on to say – "She gained little by her unnatural treachery, for she and her daughter were sent to Ghazni, ostensibly that they might learn the doctrines and duties of Islam, and there she died soon afterwards, justly scorned by the daughter whom she had sold. The unfortunate girl herself died two years later, never having been Muhammad's wife but in name." —Ed.]
Also see Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, pp. 449–51, fn. 2

and Multan towards Nahrwala. The Rai of Nahrwala, Bhim-deo, was a minor, but he had a large army and many elephants. In the day of battle the Muhammadans were defeated and the Sultan was compelled to retreat. 18

Nizāmud-dīn states -

In the year 574 A.H. he again came to Uchch [Ūch] and Multān; and thence marched towards Gujrat through the desert. Rai Bhīm Deo, who was the ruler of the country, gave him battle; and after a severe struggle, the Sultān was defeated; and after much trouble, he returned to Ghaznīn, and rested there for a short time. 19

According to Firișta,

In the year 574, he (Mu'izz al-Din) again marched to Oocha and Moultan, and from thence continued his route through the sandy desert to Guzerat. The prince, Bhim-dew (a lineal descendant from Brahma Dew of Guzerat, who opposed Mahmood Giznevy), advanced with an army to resist the Mahomedans, and defeated them with great slaughter. They suffered many hardships in their retreat, before they reached Ghizny.²⁰

Though the Muslim historians speak of 'Bhim Deo' [Bhīma-deva II] as Mu'izz al-Dīn's adversary at this time, the epigraphic evidence—corroborated by Hindu records—shows that Mūla-rājā II was the ruler of Aṇhilvāḍa [Patan] at this time.²¹ A detailed description of the battle is given by Merutunga, who says that the

¹⁸ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 294

¹⁹ The Țabaqāt-i-Akbarī. Vol. 1. Tr. De, B. Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society, 1927. p. 36 [Translated from the chronicle of Khwājah Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad Bakh-shī. —Ed.]

²⁰ Tārīķ-i-Firista, p. 170

²¹ The Indian Antiquary. Vol. 6. Ed. Burgess, J A S. Bombay: British India Press, 1877. pp. 186, 198

mother of Young Mūla-rājā, queen Nāyakī-devī, the daughter of King [Mahā-maṇḍaleśvara] Parmāṇḍī of Goa, "...taking her son [Mūla-rājā] in her lap, fought at a ghāṭ name Gāḍarāraghaṭṭa [near the foot of Mt. Ābū], and conquered the king of the Mlecchas [i.e. Mu'izz al-Dīn], by the aid of a mass of rain-clouds, that came out of season attracted by her virtue..." thus leading the Caulukyan army to victory.

The inscriptions of Bhīma II invariably give Mū-la-rājā the epithet of 'Conqueror of Garjanaka-s [Ghaz-nīn-s],' while never mentioning that Bhīma ever defeated a Muslim army. An inscription of Bhīma's reign²³ states that during the reign of Mūla-rājā,

By his prowess,—he, who was worshipped by the family of Chaülukya, even a woman easily conquered king Hammira in a battle...²⁴

The mistake of the Muslim historians in substituting Bhima for Mūla-rājā perhaps arose because Mūla-rājā II died shortly after this victory.

The place of the battle has been identified with the village Kayadram (Kāsahrada of the Sundhā Hill Inscription) at the foot of Mt. Ābū [Sirohi district, Rajasthan]. The place was very well chosen by the Gujarati generals for it was at this very place that the Gujarati army once again faced Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak nine years

²² The Prabandhacintāmani or Wishing-stone of Narratives. Tr. Tawney, C H. Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1901. p. 154 [Translated from the original Sanskrit work of Merutunga Ācārya. —Ed.] 23 A Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions. Bhavnagar: Bhavnagar Archaeological Department, 1894. p. 210, v. 27 [The original verse goes — चोलुक्यराजान्वयपूजितस्य यस्यानुभावाद्यलापि संस्थे। हम्मीरराजं तरसा जिगाय तस्माजकेपासनतः ... —Ed.]

later and the latter hesitated to attack them in that strong position.

Within three years of the defeat of the Cahamana ruler, Pṛthvī-rājā III, in 1192 CE, the new Caulukya ruler, Bhīma II had to face another tide of Muslim invasion led by Qutb al-Din Aybak. The Caulukyan king Bhīma II seems to have taken upon himself the task of resisting the Muslim depredations into the interior of Hindustān after the downfall of Pṛthvī-rājā III. He sent an army under one Jīvan Rāi [Jatwan], who according to Firișta25, was a feudatory of the Rājā of Nahrwāla. Jatwan energetically pressed the siege of Hānsī and Qutb al-Din Aybak had to make a hurried march towards that place. The Hindus, learning of the arrival of fresh reinforcements, raised the siege. According to Hasan Nizāmī, the armies attacked each other " ... like two hills of steel, and the field of battle became tulip-dyed with the blood of the warriors."26 According to Ḥasan Niẓāmī, Jatwan was killed, but according to Firişta, he was pursued up to the frontiers of Gujarat.27

After this came the defeat of the Gāhaḍavāla ruler of Kanauj, Jaya-candra [Jaichand], and the defeat of Hari-rājā, the brother of Pṛthvī-rājā III, leading to the final occupation of Ajmer by Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak in 1195. But the Muslim hold on Ajmer was far from secure. The Rājpūt tribe of Mher-s, which lived in the vicinity of Ajmer rose in revolt against the Muslims and appealed to the Caulukyan king—the sole surviving Hindu monarch who could still offer resistance to the Turks—for

²⁵ Tārīķ-i-Firișta, p. 191

²⁶ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 218 (Citing Ḥasan Niẓāmī's Tāju'l Ma'āsir)

²⁷ Tăriķ-i-Firișta, p. 192

help. Learning of the intention of the Mher-s, Qutb al-Dīn Aybak resolved to attack the Mher-s, although it was the height of summer. The conflict lasted the whole day. Next morning, the army of the Nahrwāla, (probably led by the brothers Kilhaṇa and Kīrti-pāla), appeared upon the scene and defeating the Muslims, drove them into the fort of Ajmer.

According to Firișta,

...After having been frequently dismountd in the action, and having received six wounds, he [Aybak] still fought with his wonted courage, till being forced at length by his attendents off the field, he was carried in a litter to Ajmeer.²⁸

Ḥasan Niẓāmī, the contemporary Muslim historian, also confirms this defeat of Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak at the hands of the Caulukyan army in 1195. According to him,

The action lasted during the whole day, and next morning that immense army of Nahrwála came to the assistance of the vanguard, slew many of the Musalmáns, wounded their commander, pursued them to Ajmír [Ajmer] and encamped within one parasang [league] of that place.²⁹

Confidential messengers were dispatched to Ghazni to explain this predicament of Aybak, and it was only after a "...very large army was despatched to reinforce him..." that Aybak could be rescued.

Two successive defeats at the hands of the Caulukya-s was perhaps too much for the Muslims to swallow,

²⁸ Ibid., p. 196

²⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 229 (Citing Hasan Nizāmī's Tāju'i Ma'āsir)

³⁰ Ibid.

while their armies were gaining victories elsewhere in India. Besides, they could never feel secure in India until the seat of this last great North Indian ruler was destroyed, particularly when Bhima II was fast assuming the role of the leader of the opposition to Muslim rule in India.

Hence, in the words of Ḥasan Niẓāmī,

In the middle of the month of Safar 593 H. [January 1197 CE], the world conquering Khusrú [Quib al-Din Aybak] departed from Ajmír, and with every description of force turned his face towards the annihilation of the Rái of Nahrwála. 31

Aybak advanced by way of the forts of Pālī and Nandul, which he found abandoned. The Caulukyan forces "...had collected under their leaders Rái Karan and Dárábars, in great numbers "at the foot of Mount Ábú, and at the mouth of a pass stood ready for fight and slaughter." The Musulmáns did not dare to attack them in that strong position..."32 According to S H Hodīvālā, 'Rāī Karan' is Kīrti-pāla Cauhāṇa of Nadol and 'Dārābars' is Dhārāvarṣa Paramāra, Chief of Ābū, both feudatories of the Caulukyan king.33

The Muslims did not dare to attack the Caulukyan army in that position, because it was at this very place, nine years earlier, that Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad bin Sam had been signally defeated. But for once, the Caulukyan army threw discretion to the winds and paid the penalty for the indiscretion.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., p. 230

³³ Hodivālā, Shāhpūrshāh Hormasji. Studies in Indo-Muslim History: A Critical Commentary on 'Elliot and Dowson's History of India as Told by its own Historians'. Bombay, 1939. p. 182

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In the words of Ḥasan Niẓāmī,

The Hindús seeing this hesitation, and misconstruing it into cowardice and alarm, abandonding the pass, "turned their faces towards the field of battle and the plain of honour and renown... The two armies stood face to face..."³⁴

It is clear from Ḥasan Niẓāmī's account that the army of Islam advanced under the cover of darkness of night and caught the Caulukyan army unprepared at dawn.

A severe action ensued from dawn to mid-day, when "the army of idolatory and damnation turned its back in flight from the line of battle. Most of their leaders were taken prisoners and nearly fifty thousands infidels were despatched to hell by the sword, and from the heaps of the slain, the hills and the plains became of one level." 35

Thus for the first time, Anhilvāda fell to the Muslims. The Kharataragaccha Paṭṭāvalī of Jina-pati Sūrī is the only known Hindu source which refers to this defeat of the armies of Bhīma II at the hands of the Muslims. Jina-pati saw Anahilla-paṭṭana being sacked by the Muslims. ³⁶ Ḥasan Niẓāmī exultantly writes,

"The city of Nahrwála, which is the most celebrated in that country, full of rivers," and the kingdom of Gujarát, which is "a separate region of the world," came under dominion of the Musalmáns, "and high and low were

³⁴ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 230 (Citing Hasan Nizāmī's Tāju'l Ma'āsir)

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Sharma, Dasharatha. 'The Kharataragachcha Paṭṭāvali Compiled by Jinapāla.' The Indian Historical Quarterly. Vol. 11, No. 4. Ed. Law, Narendra Nath. Calcutta: Calcutta Oriental Press, 1935. pp. 779-81

treated with royal benignity and justice." "The chief nobles and pillars of the State were favoured with handsome robes of honour, and received abundant proofs of royal kindness," then "the standards of Khusrú, victorious in battle, returned to Ajmír..."³⁷

According to Firișta, Quțb al-Dîn Aybak left a Governor in Gujarat "...with a strong garrison."38

How and when this Muslim army of occupation left Gujarat is nowhere recorded by Muslim historians. We know for certain that Bhīma was back in Anhilvāḍa in 1201.39

The Ahada grant of Bhima proves that he was controlling Mewad in A.D. 1207 and the Abu stone inscription (no. 1) of V.S. 1265 shows that the mountain passes of Abu were again under his control by the year A.D. 1209.40

We know from indigenous records that in his predicament, young Bhīma II was ably supported by the Vāghela Chief, Arņo-rājā. After Arņo-rājā lost his life in the service of the Caulukya king, the former's son, Lavaṇa-prasāda⁴¹ took charge of the Caulukyan administration and according to the Dabhoi Inscription,

By whom (Lavaṇa-prasāda), the king of the Turushkas... who had spattered the earth with the blood flowing from

³⁷ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, pp. 230–31 (Citing Ḥasan Niẓāmī's Tāju'l Ma'āsir)

³⁸ Tārīķ-i-Firișta, p. 197

³⁹ Peterson MSS 1887 No. 220, pp. 37-45

Cited by Asoke Kumar Majumdar in Chaulukyas of Gujarat (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1956) on p. 459 in fn. 34

⁴⁰ Majumdar, Asoke Kumar. Chaulukyas of Gujarat. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. 1956. p. 145

^{41 [}Lavaṇa-prasāda, or Lāvaṇya-prasāda was the son of Arṇo-rājā and Salakhana-devī. —Ed.1

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the cut-off heads of numerous kings-when he came in front, with dry lips, full of doubt-was conquered at Stambha with his arm (strong) like a post (stambha) and terrible through the sword. 42

The second reference to the rout of the Muslim army of occupation in Gujarat is contained in the Devapattana praśasti43 about Śridhara, the Governor of Devapattana -

Śrîdhara, the pride of the fort, made like to much grass the host of heroic Hammîra, that moved like the high rising waves of the ocean which on the dissolution of the world inundate the shores,—that smashed the hills by the impetus of the mere movement of its feet and that split in twain the circle of the earth.44

Thus the Caulukya king Bhīma II ably assisted by his lieutenants, Lavaņa-prasāda and Śrīdhara, did not rest content till the whole Muslim horde was driven out of Gujarat. The Muslims remembered for long the defeat of Mu'izz al-Din, the first defeat of Qutb al-Din Aybak, and the subsequent expulsion of the Muslim army of occupation. For nearly the whole of the next century Gujarat remained independent. Perhaps,

...No other North Indian dynasty put up a more sustained or successful resistance against the Muslims for a longer period [than the Caulukya-s].45

⁴² Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 1. Ed. Burgess, J A S. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1892. p. 22

⁴³ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 2. Ed. Burgess, J A S. Calcutta: Superintendent of C. tendent of Government Printing, 1894. pp. 437-46

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 439

⁴⁵ Majumdar, Asoke Kumar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, Bombay: Bharativa Vidya Ph ratiya Vidya Bhavan, 1956. p. 145

Resistance Offered by the Cāhamāṇa-s of Śākambharī

pṛthvī-rājā III, who was the last famous ruler of the Cāhamāṇa-s of Śākambharī, ruled from 1177 to 1192 CE. Pṛthvī-rāja-vijaya tells us that he was "...fully alive to the dangers of the rise of a beef-eating mleccha named Gori [Ghūrī] in the northwest who had captured Garjani [Ghaznī]." It further tells us that hearing of the atrocious conduct of the Ghūrī-s, Pṛthvī-rājā became enraged and vowed to exterminate the mlecchas. 47

In 1178, while Mu'izz al-Dīn was advancing on Gujarat by way of Uch and Multan, he sent a messenger to Pṛthvī-rājā for negotiations as he learnt the latter was bitterly hostile to the Muslims. The details of the proposals are not known because the Pṛthvī-rāja-vijaya is silent about them. However, the messenger was not welcomed and when the news of the fall of Nadol [Naddûla] reached Ajmer, Pṛthvī-rājā resolved to crush the invaders. But it is really a pity that while the Gujaratis needed help at this moment, Pṛthvī-rājā listened to the advice of his Chief Minster, Kadamba-vāsa.48 Taking both the Caulukyas and the Muslims as their enemies, both of them were left alone to destroy each other. However, at this time a messenger from Gujarat came to Pṛthvī-rājā and informed him about the defeat of the Ghūrī-s at the hands of the king of Gujarat (at Kāsahrada in 1178). Pṛthvī-rājā became exceedingly happy on hearing the news.49

⁴⁶ Pṛthvi-rāja-vijaya 10.39-40

⁴⁷ Prthvi-rāja-vijaya 10.42, 50

⁴⁸ Prthvi-rāja-vijaya 11.2—4

⁴⁹ Prthvi-rāja-vijaya 11.9

But this failure of Pṛthvī-rājā, on the advice of Kadamba-vāsa, to help the Caulukya-s in their hour of need was to prove detrimental to the Cahamana-s during 1191 and 1192, when it was the latter's turn to fight against the Muslims. They too were left severely alone by both the Caulukya-s and the Gāhadavāla-s.

The defeat of Mu'izz al-Dīn in 1178 CE made him change his plans of the conquest of India completely,50 He now turned his attention towards Punjab, which was ruled by Khusrau Malik, the last Ghaznavide ruler of Lahore. According to Minhāj, "...the servants of the state and governors of provinces and districts exercised independent power, whilst their sovereign [Khusrau Malik] abandoned himself wholly to pleasure."51

In 575 H. (1179 A.D.) he [Mu'izz al-Din] attacked and conquered Farsháwar (Pesháwar), and two years afterwards he advanced to Lohor (Lahore).52

But it took him five years to occupy Lahore in 1186, and even that when he treacherously seized Khusrau Malik. The destruction of the Yamini kingdom removed the barrier which had so long separated the Ghoride leader from the Cāhamāṇa-s. The two now stood face to face.

According to the Hindu sources: the Hammira-mahākāvya of Naya-candra Sūrī states that Pṛthvī-rājā defeated Muḥammad Ghūrī at least seven times while the Prabandha-cintāmaṇi of Merutunga and the Pṛthvi-rāja-rāso of Candra Bardāi put the number of Prthvi-rājā's victories at twenty-one. On the other hand, Muslim

^{50 [}After this humiliating defeat, for twelve long years (1178-90), Mu'izz al-Dia did Mu'izz al-Dîn did not attack a Hindu king. —Ed.]

⁵¹ Tabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 114 52 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 294

writers like Minhāj, Firista, and others, mention only writers have between these two rulers - one in 1191 CE two pand another, a year later. Dasharatha Sharma reconand allow these two versions by suggesting that the Ghoride generals began raiding the Cāhamāna territories soon general occupation of Lahore in 1186 but were beaten back by the Cāhamāna forces. These frontier skirmishes have been magnified into big battles by the Hindu writers while the Muslim historians have ignored them altogether.53

According to Minhāj, in 587 H. (1191 CE), Sultān Mu'izz al-Din "...caused the forces of Islām to be organized, and advanced against the fortress of Tabarhindah, and took that stronghold, and made it over to the charge of Malik Ziyā-ud-Dīn."54 Tabarhindah or Sirhind, lay well inside the territories of the Cahamana ruler and its capture caused great consternation among the feudatories of Pṛthvī-rājā III. The latter organised a large army. Firișta gives the number of Hindu army as 2,00,000 horses and 3,000 elephants. Along with Govinda-rājā, the feudatory ruler of Delhi, Pṛthvī-rājā encountered Muhammad Ghūri at Tarā'īn.55

Before the onslaught of the Cāhamāṇa army, the right and left flanks of the Muslim army broke down and took to flight.56 Muḥammad Ghūrī exhibiting rare courage, rallied the remainder of his forces, attacked Govinda-rājā, the Chief of Delhi, who was directing his

⁵³ Sharma, Dasharatha. Early Chauhān Dynasties. Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1959. p. 81

⁵⁴ Țabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, pp. 457-58 55 Ibid., p. 459. Firișta identifies Tarā'în with Taraori (on the banks of the Sarasvatī), which is fourteen miles from Thanesar and eighty miles from Delhi (See Tarik-i-Firista, p. 172) 56 Ibid., p. 463, fn. 3

army from the back of his elephant. The *Rājā* was struck in the face by the Sultān's spear and two of his teeth were knocked out. But Govinda-rājā, who seemed to be equally valiant and skilful, launched a javelin, severely wounding the Sultān in the arm. The Sultān might have fallen off his horse had not a Khaljī youth recognised him and carried him out of the field of battle.⁵⁷

The Muslim army, not seeing their leader, fled headlong from the battlefield and did not draw rein till they had reached a place considered safe from pursuit. The Sultan was also brought there in a litter of broken spears. From there, they returned to their own dominions.58 Pṛthvī-rājā could now easily have consummated his victory by chasing and annihilating his routed enemy. But instead, he allowed the defeated Muslim army to return unmolested. This magnanimity, though in accord with the humane dictums of Hindu śāstras, was completely unsuitable against the ruthless enemy who recognised no moral or ideological scruples in the attainment of victory. The Hindus lacked the capacity to comprehend the real nature of their ruthless adversaries and the new tactics needed to encounter their challenge to Indian independence.

On his return to Ghaznī, Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad Ghūrī made "...sleep and rest unlawful to himself..." and devoted all his energies to the one task of avenging his defeat. Pṛthvī-rājā's forces on the other hand, besieged Tabarhindah, which capitulated after thirteen months, just before Muḥammad Ghūrī returned again to India in 1192, with a select force of 1,20,000 bearing armour

⁵⁷ Tabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 460 58 Ibid., pp. 461–64

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 464, fn. 7 (Citing Firişta's words)

Hasan Nizāmī and Firișta inform us that on reaching Lahore, Mu'izz al-Din sent an officer calling upon "...Pithorā Rāe [Pṛthvī-rājā] to embrace the Musalmān

faith and acknowledge his superemacy."60

Pṛthvī-rājā who was already on the battlefield of Tara'in with a force "...of 300,000 horse, besides above 3000 elephants, and a body of infantry..."61 wrote back to the Sultan offering to do him no harm if he chose wisely to return to his country, but threatening him with complete ruin otherwise. According to Firișta, the letter ran as follows –

To the bravery of our soldiers we know you are no stranger; and to our great superiority in number, which daily increases your eyes bear testimony. If you are wearied of your own existence, yet have pity upon your troops, who may still think it a hapiness to live. It were better, then, you should repent in time of the rash resolution you have taken, and we shall permit you to retreat in safety; but if you have determined to brave your evil destiny, we have sworn by our gods to advance upon you with our rank-breaking elephants, our plain-trampling horses, and blood-thirsting soldiers, early in the morning, to crush the army which your ambition has led to ruin. 62

The Sultan this time tried stratagem before using force and wrote back,

I have marched into India at the command of my brother, whose general only I am. Both honour and duty bind me to exert myself to the utmost in his service; I cannot retreat, therefore, without orders; but I shall be glad to obtain a truce till he is informed of the situation of affairs, and till I have received his answer. 63

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 466, fn. 1 (Citing Ḥasan Niẓāmī's words)

⁶¹ Tārīķ-i-Firista, p. 175

⁶² Ibid., pp. 175-76

⁶³ Ibid., p. 176

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The Hindus fell into the rule and according to Firişta, they passes the night in revelry. The same night, "... the Sulṭān made his preparations for battle, and, after the dawn of the morning, when the Rājpūt-s had left their camp for the purpose of obeying calls of nature, and for the purpose of performing their ablutions, he entered the plain with his ranks marshalled. Although the unbelievers were amazed and confounded, still, in the best manner they could, they stood to fight, and sustained a complete overthrow."

Another almost contemporary Muslim historian, Nur-ud-din Muḥammad 'Awfī, writing in his Jawāmi ul-Hiḥāyāt, states that the Ghūri Sultān in order to prevent any suspicion, kept "...fires burning all the night, so that the enemy might suppose it to be their camping ground. The Sultán then marched off in another direction with the main body of his army. The infidels saw the fires and felt assured of their adversaries being there encamped. The Sultán marched all night and got in the rear of Kola. At dawn he made his onslaught upon the camp followers and killed many men."65

Hindu sources also confirm the ruse played on Pṛthvī-rājā by Muḥammad Ghūrī. The Pṛthvī-rāja-prabandha states, "Pṛthvīrāja had been asleep... In the meantime, the Prime Minister had the Sultān sent for." According to Merutunga's Prabandha-cintāmaṇi too Pṛthvī-rājā was asleep at the time after breaking his ekādaśī fast.

⁶⁴ Ţabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 466, fn. 1 (Citing Ḥasan Nizāmī's Tāju'l Ma'āsir)

⁶⁵ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 200

⁶⁶ Purātana-prabandha-saṅgraha. 'Singhi-jaina-granthamālā' (No. 2)

Ed. Muni, Jinavijaya. Calcutta: Singhī Jaina Jñānapīţha, 1936. p. 86 (See Prthvi-rāja-prabandhah)

⁶⁷ Cited by Dasharatha Sharma in Early Chauhan Dynasties (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1959) on p. 86 in fn. 69

By all accounts, it was hardly daylight, when Mu'izz al-Dīn's army delivered the first attack. Even then the Rājpūt-s drew themselves up in fighting order but were defeated by the well-thought-out plan of the Sultān. According to H G Raverty,

One writer, however, throws a little more light upon the matter [of the Sultān's strategy]; and from that it appears that the Sultān, leaving the central portion of his army—about half his entire force—some miles in the rear, with the baggage and other matérial, divided the remainder into five divisions, four of which, each of 10,000 light-armed horse-mounted archers, were to attack the enemy right and left, and front and rear, and retire, pretending flight. This mode of fighting having been carried on from about 9 a.m. to the time of afternoon prayer, the Sultān, considering that the enemy had been sufficiently wearied, with the remainder—his fifth division, the flower of his troops, consisting some 12,000 horse—made a final charge, and put the Hindū army to a complete rout. 68

The Hindu army was completely routed, losing about a hundred thousand men, according to Hasan Nizāmī. 69 Govinda-rājā of Delhi was slain and Pṛth-vǐ-rājā who tried to escape on a horse, was pursued and overtaken near Sarsuti [Sirsa district, Haryana]. This battle practically put an end to the sovereignity of the Cāhamāṇa-s of Śākambharī, although like a shrewd politician, Mu'izz al-Dīn did not immediately kill Pṛth-vī-rājā. According to Merutunga's Prabandha-cintāmaṇi, Muḥammad Ghūrī had some intention of reinstating Pṛthvī-rājā on the throne of Ajmer but had him beheaded when his hatred of Muslims was revealed to

⁶⁸ Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 468, fn. 2

⁶⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 215

Muḥammad by his picture gallery containing paintings of Muslim soldiers being killed by droves of pigs.⁷⁰

Hasan Nizāmī too mentions that "...ancient hatred against the Musalmáns was deeply rooted and concealed in the bottom of his heart," and when detected in some intrigue, orders were issued for his death.

The defeat of Tarā'īn and death of Pṛthvī-rājā was a major disaster for the Rājpūt-s and it virtually put to end the era of the Cāhamāṇa ascendancy in North India. The fire of Cāhamāṇa opposition was kept burning for a couple of years more by Hari-rājā, the brother of Pṛthvî-rājā. He expelled the son of Pṛthvī-rājā from Ajmer in 1193, who had accepted the vassalager of the Muslims. Taking advantage of Quṭb al-Dīn's absence from Delhi, Hari-rājā even planned to attack Delhi. But on Aybak's return from Ghaznī, Hari-rājā seems to have lost his nerve and committed suicide. Ajmer was captured by Muslim forces and put under a Muslim officer in 1194.

Thus ended the glory of the Cāhamāṇa-s, who under Pṛthvī-rājā III or 'Rāī Pithora,' as he was affectionately called, had become the strongest rulers of medieval India. Pṛthvī-rāja-vijaya of Jayānaka throughout hails him as an incarnation of Rāma. His bravery, courage, and chivalry in the art of warfare were unequalled. But sadly enough, he lacked the foresight and statesmanship needed to cope with the wily Ghoride invader. With the Ghūrī knocking at the gates of his northern frontier, he insisted on following a policy of dig-vijaya against his

⁷⁰ The Prabandhacintāmani or Wishing-stone of Narratives. Tr. Tawney, C H. Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1901. p. 191 [Translated from the original Sanskrit work of Merutunga Ācārya. —Ed.]

⁷¹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 215

⁷² Tārīķ-i-Firișta, p. 179

neighbouring kings of Jejākabhukti, Kanauj, and even Gujarat. United with these kings, he could not only have stemmed the tide of the new Muslim invasion but could have freed the Punjab from Muslim domination. But he had estranged every other powerful Indian ruler and the Caulukya-s behaved in 1192 exactly as he himself had done in 1178. The other powerful Indian ruler, Jaya-candra Gāhaḍavāla of Kanauj, actually rejoiced at his defeat at Tarā'īn and had his capital illuminated.⁷³

Resistance Offered by the Gāhaḍavāla-s of Kanauj

We have already seen that the Gāhaḍavāla-s of Kanauj had to face a number of raids of Muslims in the later Ghaznavide era. Jaya-candra, who succeeded his father Vijaya-candra circa 1170, speaks about his father that he ".....swept away the affliction of the globe by the streams (of water flowing as) from clouds from the eyes of the wives of the Hambîra, the abode of wanton destruction to the earth."

But lulled by the temporary cessation of the Muslim raids during the weak rule of the last Ghaznavide ruler, Khusrau Malik, Jaya-candra seems to have busied himself in petty feuds with his powerful Cāhamāṇa neighbour Pṛthvī-rājā III. According to Pṛthvī-rāja-rāso of

⁷³ Purātana-prabandha-sangraha. 'Singhī-jaina-granthamālā' (No. 2) Ed. Muni, Jinavijaya. Calcutta: Singhī Jaina Jñānapītha, 1936. pp.

^{86, 89 (}See Prthvi-rāja-prabandhah and Jaya-candra-prabandhah)

⁷⁴ See supra Chapter 4. Resistance of the Ghaznavides

⁷⁵ The Indian Antiquary. Vol. 18. Eds. Fleet, John Faithfull and Temple, Richard Carnac. Bombay: British India Press, 1889. p. 133 [Benares College Copper-plate Grant of Jaya-candra (c. 1175 CE). The verse goes: "...भुवनदलनहेलाहम्म्यंहंवि(म्बी)रनारीनयनजलद्धाराधौतभूलोक-तापः ॥ लोकत्रयक्रमणकेलिविशृङ्खलानि प्रख्यात..." – Ibid., p. 130 —Ed.]

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Candra Bardāī, Jaya-candra is said to have maintained friendly relations with the Candela-s and helped the Candela king Parmardi [Paramāl] in his wars against Pṛthvī-rājā. The same work contains the story of the hostility between Pṛthvī-rājā and Jaya-candra because of the love and marriage of the former with the latter's daughter Saṃyogitā. The *Rāso* is historically unreliable⁷⁶ but on this point of hostility between Jaya-candra and Pṛthvī-rājā, Dasharatha Sharma in a series of articles, has tried to prove its authenticity.⁷⁷

However, it is a historical fact that Pṛthvī-rājā and Jaya-candra were not on good terms. As pointed out earlier, Jaya-candra had his capital illuminated when he heard of the news of Pṛthvī-rājā's defeat and death. However, "...on discovering that the Muslims were determined to annex Northern India, [Jaya-candra] had repented of his unpatriotic alliance and was preparing to attack the intruders." The preparations of Jaya-candra to meet the Muslims might have been the reason for Aybak's recall to Ghaznī in 1193, where the plan to meet this danger to Muslim ruler in India seems to have been chalked out.

In 1194, Mu'izz al-Dīn came fully prepared to Hindustān. Ḥasan Niẓāmī inform us,

When the army was mustered, it was found to amount to "fifty thousand mounted men clad in armour and coats

⁷⁶ See pp. 203-11 of the Journal of the Bengal Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. 2 (1927)

⁷⁷ Sarma, Dasharatha. 'The Age and Historicity of the Pṛthvīrāja Rāso.' The Indian Historical Quarterly. Vol. 16, No. 4. Ed. Law, Narendra Nath. Calcutta: Calcutta Oriental Press, 1940. pp. 738–49 Sarma, Dasharatha. Pṛthvīrāj Rāso kā Aitihāsik Ādhār. Vol. 3, pt. 3. 78 The Cambridge History of India. Vol. 3. Ed. Haig, Wolseley. Cambridge: University Press, 1928. pp. 42–43

of mail," with which they advanced to meet the Rái of Benares.⁷⁹

The two armies met at Candrāvara (modern Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh). According to Ḥasan Niẓāmī,

The Rái of Benares, Jai Chand, the chief of idolatry and perdition, advanced to oppose the royal troops with an army, countless as the particles of sand...

The Rái of Benares...prided himself on the number of his forces and war elephants...⁸⁰

According to the Tārīkh-ul-Kāmil of 'Alī ibn al-Athīr,

The Hindu prince had seven hundred elephants, and his men were said to amount to a million.81

The battle was fiercely contested and the Gāhaḍavāla-s, led by Jaya-candra almost carried the day, when the latter, seated on a lofty howdah, received a deadly wound from an arrow, and "...fell from his exalted seat to the earth."82

From Candrāvara, the Muslim army proceeded to Benares and Asnī [Fatehpur district, Uttar Pradesh], where Jaya-candra had kept his treasure, but it will be wrong to say that the defeat at Candrāvara put an end to the independent kingdom of Kanauj. In the Macchlīshahr Grant issued by Jaya-candra's son Hariścandra, the latter appears as an independent sovereign. 83 In 1197, Kanauj, Jaunpur, and Mirzapur were in posse-

⁷⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 222

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 223

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 251

⁸² Ibid., p. 223

⁸³ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 10. Eds. Konow, Sten and Venkayya, V. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1909–10. pp. 93–100

sion of Hariścandra.⁸⁴ Kanauj seems to have stayed independent till the reign of Shams al-Dīn Ilṭuṭmish, who ultimately conquered it from Hariścandra's successor, Aḍakkamalla. Ilṭuṭmish issued coins to commemorate his victory.⁸⁵

During Ilṭuṭmish's reign, one Bartūh was the ruler of Oudh [Avadh], "...under whose hands and sword more than one hundred and twenty thousand Musulmans had received martyrdom." Bartūh was overthrown and killed by Nāsru al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh, the eldest son of Ilṭuṭmish. Bartūh might have been a feudatory of Adakkamalla, the last of the Gāhaḍavāla rulers of Kanauj. It is not unlikely that Bartūh is identical with Baraha-deva of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa family. Baraha-deva of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa family.

The Last Phase of Indian Resistance: Defeat and Death of Bakhtiyār Khaljī

With the defeat of the Gāhaḍavāla-s, the field opened for the Muslim conquest of Bihar and Bengal. The man to take advantage of the hiatus, was Ikhtiyār al-Dīn Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī. Bihar, it appears, was a sort of no-man's land. The Gāhaḍavāla-s after their defeat had retired and the Sena dynasty's rule ex-

⁸⁴ Ganguly, D C. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 55

⁸⁵ Wright, H Nelson. Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum Calcutta. Volume 2, Part 1. Oxford: Trustees of the Indian Museum, 1907. p. 21, no. 39 (Bilád-al-Hind)

⁸⁶ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 329 (Citing Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj)

⁸⁷ Ganguly, D C. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 55

tended only to the limits of Bengal. This explains the ease with which Bihar was conquered with only "...two hundred horsemen in defensive armour..."88 by Bakhti-

yār Khaljī circa 1202 CE.

The defeat of the mighty Cāhamāṇa-s and Gāhadavāla-s seems to have unnerved the aged (about eighty years) ruler of Sena dynasty of Bengal, Laksmana-sena, who made no efforts ot check Bakhtiyar's advance through Bihar to the frontiers of his own kingdom. His passivity was an invitation to the latter to invade Bengal, which he did a year later.

In a lightning raid, Bakhtiyār destroyed the morale of Laksmana-sena and his courtiers, who escaped from Nudiah [Nadia, West Bengal] and fled to Sanknāt, in East Bengal, where Laksmana-sena's sons continued to rule for a long time to come. Minhāj clearly states -

His (Lakṣmaṇa-sena's) descendants upto this time are rulers in the country of Bang [East Bengal]. 89

The inscriptions of the sons of Laksmana-sena - Viśva-rūpa-sena and Keśava-sena90 – confirm that the successors of Laksmana-sena continued to rule long after Bakhtiyār Khaljī.

As S H Hodīvālā points out,

...we possess epigraphic evidence of Lakshmanasena's descendants having ruled for at least three generations at Vikrampur near Sonärgaon in Dacca. Sanknät may be a mistake for Sonārgaon [or Songāon].91

⁸⁸ Țabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 552

⁸⁹ Tabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj, p. 558

⁹⁰ See supra Chapter 5. Raids of Muslims - Mostly Unrecorded by Muslim Historians but Referred to in Sanskrit Inscriptions

⁹¹ Hodīvālā, Shāhpūrshāh Hormasji. Studies in Indo-Muslim History: A Critical Commentary on 'Elliot and Dowson's History of India as Told by its own Historians'. Bombay, 1939. p. 207

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It was in Assam, however, that Bakhtiyār Khaljī's chain of unbroken successes was broken. The Kānāibaḍaśī (Gauhāti) inscription, 92 though short, is invaluable, since it gives the exact date of the invasion – i.e., 7th March 1206 CE. According to Minhāj, the real purpose of Bakhtiyār on this occasion was the invasion of Tibet. On the way, the Muslim army passed over a bridge consisting of more than twenty arches. Muḥammad left at the head of the bridge two of his 'amir's with troops to guard it until his return. Due to the neglect of these officers, "...the Hindús of Kámrúp had come there and destroyed the bridge." 93

When Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī and his army returned to the place, he found no means of crossing the river.

In the vicinity of this place was perceived a temple, very lofty and strong, and of beautiful structure. In it there were numerous idols of gold and silver, and one very large golden idol, which exceeded two or three thousand miskáls in weight. Muhammad Bhaktiyár and the remnant of his army sought refuge in that temple, and set about procuring wood and ropes for constructing rafts to cross the stream. The Rái of Kámrúp was informed of the distress and weakness of the Muhammadans, and he issued orders to all the Hindús of his territory to come up, levy after levy, and all around the temple they were to stick their bamboo spears in the ground and to plait them together so as to form a kind of wall. 94

94 Ibid., pp. 312-13

⁹² See supra Chapter 5. Raids of Muslims – Mostly Unrecorded by Muslim Historians but Referred to in Sanskrit Inscriptions 93 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 312 (Citing Ţabaķāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj)

The Muslim army, afraid of being surrounded, sallied forth and reached the open closely pursued by the Hindus. The Muslims were driven into the river and only "...Muhammad Bakhtiyár with some horse [sic], to the number of about a hundred, more or less, crossed the river with the greatest difficulty, but all the rest were drowned."95

Although escaping this watery grave, Bakhtiyār was seized by sickness and excessive grief. "If ever he did ride out, all people, women and children, from their housetop and the streets, cried out cursing and abusing him." Minhāj informs us that Muḥammad Bakhtiyār's condition grew worse under the impact of this disaster and he died soon afterwards, possibly murdered by 'Alī Mardān Khaljī.

The Musalmān invasion of the Brahmaputra valley was repeated on several occasions during the next five centuries of Muslim rule over North India, but most of these expeditions ended in disaster and Islam failed to make any inroads into the valley. The last of these invasions was led by Mīr Jumlā [Bahādur], the famous general of [Muḥī al-Dîn Muḥammad] Aurangzīb. Mīr Jumlā's march to Brahmaputra ended in disaster and retreat and he himself expired from the hardship of the campaign in 1663 CE.



⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 313 96 Ibid

7

The Real Nature of Indian Resistance and Causes of Defeat

The Previous chapters, an attempt has been made to present the history of the epic struggle of the Indians against the attempts of the early Muslim invaders to foist an alien faith, an alien culture, and an alien rule over Indian soil. Beginning with the first Arab expedition against Thāna, near Bombay, in 636 CE, the Muslims only succeeded in establishing the Delhi Sultanate in 1206 CE, i.e., after prolonged and relentless efforts lasting for as many as five hundred and seventy years. The magnitude of the resistance offered by Indians can be easily comprehended if we remember that the duration of the effective Muslim rule over Northern India, not to speak of the whole of India, which was less, if ever, lasted only five hundred years, until the death of [Muḥī al-Dīn Muḥammad] Aurangzīb in 1707.

During this long period of Indian resistance (636 to 1206 CE), the infiltration of the Arabs, and later on the Turks, continued almost unabated into India, both through armed invasions as well as through peaceful migration from Central Asia. The Hindus, true to their

catholicity of religious outlook and rich cultural tradition of tolerance, never obstructed the peaceful immigrants and even zealously granted them security and full religious freedom. Al-Işṭakhrī wrote in c. 951 CE,

From Kambáya to Saimúr is the land of the Balhará, and in it there are several Indian kings. It is a land of infidels, but there are Musalmans in its cities, and none but Musalmáns rule over them on the part of the Balhará. There are Jama' masjids in them. The city in which the Balhará dwells is Mánkír, which has an extensive territory. 1

K A Nizami rightly points out,

While the extension of Turkish political influence was stoutly resisted by the Rajputs during the later Ghaznavid period, Muslim traders, merchants, saints and mystics peacefully penetrated into the country and settled at number of important places.²

Jaya-simha Siddha-rājā of Gujarat (1094–1144) punished the Hindus guilty of destroying a Muslim mosque and granted "...a lac of Bálotras to enable them to rebuild the mosque and minarets. He also granted to Khatíb four articles of dress." 'Alī ibn al-Athīr writes about Benares,

¹ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 1. London: Trübner and Co., 1867. p. 27

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1]

² The Delhi Sultanat (A.D. 1206-1526). 'A Comprehensive History of India' (Vol. 5). Eds. Habib, Mohammad and Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1970. pp. 137-38

³ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 2. London: Trübner and Co., 1869. p. 164

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2]

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There were Mussalmáns in that country since the days of Mahmúd bin Subuktigín, who continued faithful to the law of Islám, and constant in prayer and good work.⁴

At Bahraich, the grave of Sālār Mas'ūd, who died just after Maḥmūd of Ghaznī, was allowed to be preserved for posterity⁵ and as Nizami points out, "...there was some Muslim population to look after the grave." Similarly the greatest Chishtī saint of India, Shaykh Mu'īn al-Dīn Chishtī [also known as Mu'īn al-Dīn Ḥasan Sijzī and Khwājā Garīb Nawāz] came to Ajmer before the battles of Tarā'īn and was able to attract a number of devoted followers. Similarly,

Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariyya, whose ancestors had been living in India for three generations, was born at Kangra in 1192 A.D.⁷

It is all the more remarkable that this Hindu tolerance towards the Muslim merchants and mystics should have continued even after the invasions of Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghaznī, who according to al-Bīrūnī, had incited a deep hatred in the Hindu minds. It is nowhere recorded that these Muslim settlements played any part

⁴ Ibid., p. 251

⁵ Tārīkh-i-Firoz Shāhi of Zia-u'd-din Baranī. Ed. Khan, Sayyid Ahmad. Calcutta: Bibliotheca Indica, 1862. p. 491

Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961) on p. 77 in fn. 2

⁶ Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century. Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961. p. 77

⁷ Prof. Mohammad Habib's Introduction to Elliot and Downson's History of India as Told by its Own Historians. Vol. 2. Aligarh: Cosmopolitan Publishers, 1952. p. 48

[[]Hereafter referred to as: Introduction to Elliot and Dowson]

in the conflict of the Rājpūt kings against the Muslim armies but, as Prof. Habib points out,

The far-flung campaigns of Sultan Mahmud would have been impossible without an accurate knowledge of traderoutes and local sources, which was probably obtained from Muslim merchants.8

The same can be said to hold good about the invasions of Muḥammad Ghūrī or Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak.9

The invasion of India by the Muslims brought them into confrontation with one of the most ancient cultures of world. Though politically, after a long and protracted struggle, they were successful in establishing Muslim rule in India, yet the rich cultural heritage of India could not be subverted right up to the end. Thus the Indian resistance has, in reality, two facets - one political and the other cultural. Keeping aside, for the time being, the political resistance and the reasons that led to its ultimate breakdown, we shall deal presently with the cultural aspect of India's resistance.

Recently¹⁰ there has been a tendency, especially among our modern Muslim historians, to magnify the impact of the social and cultural aspects of Islam over the Indian masses and their subsequent contribution to the success of Muslim arms in India.

⁸ Ibid., p. 46

^{9 [}Sita Ram Goel speaks about the role played by the sufts, who operated as sleeper cells for the Islamic invaders. He writes, "The sufis were working not only as the spies of Islamic imperialism but also as deceivers of gullible Hindu masses." - p. 44 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) -- Editor]

^{10 [}A reference to the 1970s and 80s. However, the Nehruvian and post-Nehruvian period of Independent India, spanning nearly fifty years saw a spate of such disingenuous historians. —Ed.]

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M Nizamuddin, writing in the chapter of Islamic Studies states,

...Since the Muslims were followers of a monotheistic religion which was infused with humanitarian principles of social justice, moral rectitude, spiritual uplift, equality of rights and dignity of labour, it was welcomed at every step and resulted in the spread of human civilization during the medieval period. Islam had brought to India a luminous torch which rescued humanity at a time when old civilizations were on the decline...11

Prof. M Habib has propounded a novel Marxist approach to solve the problem of the ultimate collapse of Hindu India against the Turkish invaders. His arguments propounded in his Introduction to the revised edition of the writings of Elliot and Dowson (Vol. 2) can be summarised as follows:

The Hindu society is built upon the most invidious caste distinctions as propounded in the Manu-smrti. Al-Birūnī who came to India in the early eleventh century has testified to the actual prevalence of these caste-barriers in the Hindu society -

The rigidity of caste-restriction in India has varied from age to age. But it was certainly very rigid during the Ghaznavide and Ghorian times. 12

As against this, the Prophet Muhammad had prpounded the philosophy of "...the brotherhood of a classless society."13 The noted historian Paramatma Saran, expounding the thesis of M Habib, states,

13 Ibid., p. 2

¹¹ Nizamuddin, M. 'Islamic Studies.' Oriental Studies in India. Eds. Dandekar, R N and Raghavan V. New Delhi: Organising Committee: 26th International Congress of Orientalists, 1964. p. 147 12 Introduction to Elliot and Dowson, p. 45

The Ghaznavid and other Turkish invaders brought to the down-trodden masses of India the message of dethe work and emancipation. At their clarion call the exploited Hindu masses rushed into the arms of these invader deliverers. 14

Saran himself refuses to subscribe to this thesis and searchingly asks, how is it that "...Allah manages to survive within the framework of this new Marxism."15

But before commencing, let us complete the summary of M Habib's arguments. He goes on to state -

Face to face with the social and economic provision of the 'Shariat' and the Hindu 'Smritis' as political alternatives, the Indian city-worker preferred the 'Shariat.'16

Further referring to the Ghorian conquest, he says -

This was not a conquest, properly so-called. This was a turn-over of public opinion—a sudden turn-over, no doubt but still, one that was long overdue. 17

Writing in similar vein, K A Nizami says,

Had the Indian masses resisted the establishment of the Turkish rule in India, the Ghurids would not have been able to retain even an inch of Indian territory. 18

Before making a critical appraisal of the above mentioned views, let us examine the bias of the claim of Islamic superiority over medieval Hinduism. According

¹⁴ Saran, P. 'Historical Studies: Ancient India.' Oriental Studies in India. Eds. Dandekar, R N and Raghavan V. New Delhi: Organising Committee: 26th International Congress of Orientalists, 1964. p. 97

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 98

¹⁶ Introduction to Elliot and Dowson, p. 52

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century. Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961. p. 80

to Prof. M Habib, there are "...two basic principles of Islam from which all other principles are derived. Now the first principle—faith in God—is as old as the hills. The Quran claims no novelty on that account... The second principle—the brotherhood of a classless society within the faith or the millat—is definitely and radically new."19 Yusuf Husain too lays stress on Islam's "... new social message of the worth of every human being in the sight of God..."20

But, as pointed out by R C Majumdar, "...neither the theory of Islām, nor its practice, as regards the Hindus, could appeal to the latter as bringing a new message of equality of men."21 The Hindus of medieval India had to wear the badge of inferiority, for three and a half centuries of Muslim rule to obtain equal political and civic rights in the reign of Akbar. At least in theory, no religion of the world preaches the universal brotherhood of man more emphatically than the Bhagavad-Gitā or Vedanta, which identifies every soul with the Brahman. Of course, this doctrine was not applied in the social life of the Hindus when the Muslims came to India.22 But even before their advent, a movement to rid Hinduism of polytheism, idolatory, and casteism had been started

¹⁹ Introduction to Elliot and Dowson, p. 2

²⁰ Husain, Yusuf. Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1959. p. 31

²¹ Majumdar, R C. The Delhi Sultanate. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 6). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1960. p. 553

^{22 [}When we see the history of the varna system and how it was applied in Hindu society across millennia, it becomes quite clear that owing to the repeated Islamic invasions, the society in general and the varna system in particular became markedly rigid. And 50, the rigidity of the varna system—rather than being a cause for the defeat of the Hindus—was a result of the defeat of the Hindus by Islamic forces. -Ed.]

in Maharashtra. The Varkari Sampradaya to which the two great preachers of Maharashtra, Jñāna-deva and Nama-deva belonged, existed in Maharashtra since the ninth century CE or even earlier.23 This sect regarded all castes alike and did not observe any restrictions of untouchability.24 Even one thousand years before the rise of Islam, Jainism and Buddhism in India had raised their voice against casteism.25

Thus for Indians, there was nothing 'radically new' among the preaching of the Prophet of Islam, and the claims of 'sudden turnover of public opinion' or that of willing conversion to the Islamic faith to escape the rigours of Hindu society and religion, is completely unwarranted by historical facts. Al-Bīrūnī, the most notable authority for our period, nowhere speaks of such willing acceptance of Islamic faith. In fact, what he says is just the opposite -

...the repugnance of the Hindus against foreigners increased more and more when the Muslims began to make their inroads into their country.26

^{23 [}Even before the varkaris, we have the alvars and nayanmars of Tamil Nadu and the natha and siddha sects (panthas), then we have the Śiva-śaranas of Karnataka in the twelfth century. All of these sampradāyas went beyond varna. —Ed.]

²⁴ Majumdar, R C. The Delhi Sultanate. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 6). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1960. pp. 550-51

^{25 [}There are examples from our earliest treatises—including the Veda-Samhitās, the Upanisads, and the two Epics-that subvert the typical notion of varna. From the earliest times, varna has been deemed as a peripheral aspect of Sanatana-dharma and never included among its core values. And since the time of the Maurya-s, our ruling class have comprised members of all varnas, a number of whom were vaisyas and śūdras – prime examples being Gupta-s, Cālukya-s, Rājpūt-s, Candela-s, and Paramāra-s. —Ed.]

²⁶ Sachau, Edward C. Alberuni's India. Vol. 1. London: Kegan Paul,

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Again,

Maḥmûd utterly ruined the prosperity of the country, and performed there wonderful exploits, by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions... Their scattered remains cherish, of course, the inveterate aversion towards all Muslims. This is the reason too, why Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country conquered by us, and have fled to places which our hands cannot yet reach, to Kashmir, Benares, and other places.²⁷

What happened in the early years of Muslim rule confirms the statement of al-Bīrūnī. Even those converted to Islam reverted to the Hindu fold in Sindh. Al-Balādhurī informs us that in the times of Ḥākim [al-Ḥakam ibn 'Awāna], the Governer of Sindh, "...The people of India had returned to idolatory excepting those of Kassa, and the Musalmáns had no place of security in which they could take refuge..."²⁸

In the times of Maḥmūd of Ghaznī, Sukha-pāla, one of the sons of Ānanda-pāla, had been converted to Islam under the name of Nawāsa Shāh [or Nawāstah Shāh] and placed in temporary charge of Maḥmūd's Indian possessions.²⁹

Sukha-pāla returned to the Hindu fold and threw off his allegiance to Maḥmūd. Sukha-pāla was later on

Trench, Trübner & Co., 1910. p. 21 [Translation of the Kitāb al-Hind of al-Birūnī]

[Hereafter referred to as: Alberuni's India, Vol. 1]

27 Ibid., p. 22

28 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 126

29 Reynolds, James. The Kitab-i-Yamini, Historical Memoirs of the Amír Sabaktagin, and the Sutlán Mahmúd of Ghazna. London: The Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1858. p. 338 [Translated from the Persian version of the contemporary Arabic chronicle Tārīķ-i-Yamīnī of Abū al-Nasr 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Ut-bī. —Ed.]

defeated by Maḥmūd. He was imprisoned for the rest of his life but he did not give up his Hindu religion. 30

To refute the theory of 'sudden turnover of public opinion,' A L Srivastava quotes the pages of Dharma-svāmin's autobiography, "...the only non-Muslim contemporary foreign chronicle written by a Tibetan monk." Dharma-svāmin visited India in 1234–36 CE, and saw with his own eyes the panic caused by the Turkish ravages in Bihar. He mentions the flight of the people from their homes and the prevalence of untouchability but he "...has not a word to say about the untouchables' alleged non-co-operation with the caste Hindus or their turning Muslims and joining the invaders." The proposed property of the people from their homes and the prevalence of untouchables' alleged non-co-operation with the caste Hindus or their turning Muslims and joining the invaders."

In view of lack of definite evidence, Paramatma Saran also does not agree with Prof. Habib --

It is equally unwarranted to attribute it [the success of the Muslims] solely to the social and religious peculiarities of the Hindus, for our ideas about them are also vague and indistinct, and based on no sure knowledge of facts. It is true that we have a mass of literature and other data on this subject, but it is difficult to explain their bearing on the social evolution in different parts of India at different periods of time.³³

³⁰ Zayn al-Akbār of Gardîzı, p. 59

Cited by Sri Ram Sharma in Studies in Medieval Indian History. (Sholapur: Institute of Public Administration, 1956) on p. 124

³¹ Srivastava, A L. 'A Survey of India's Resistance to Medieval Invaders from the North-West: Causes of Eventual Hindu Defeat.' Quarterly Review of Historical Studies. Vol. 2. Calcutta: Institute of Historical Studies, 1963–64. pp. 172. ff [Also published in Journal of Indian History, Vol. 43 (1965) —Ed.]

³³ Saran, Paramatma and Majumdar, R C. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 126

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The absence of any conclusive evidence has even led Prof. Habib to conclude –

...the acceptance of Islam by the city-workers was a decision of local professional groups, and that in making their decisions they were naturally more concerned with mundane affairs and their position in the social order than with abstract theological truths...³⁴

But what has escaped the attention of most historians is that from the very beginning of Muslim rule in India, the Hindus were equally, if not more, intent to preserve their religious and cultural identitity as the Muslims were to foist upon them their own. In Sindh, Muhammad bin Qāsim started with fire and sword. The people of all the countries conquered by the Muslims had already been converted to Islam except Spain. An exception had been made only for 'the people of the book' - i.e., the Jews and the Christians, who had been allowed to retain their cultural and religious identity after payment of jizyah. For the idolators of India, there could be no choice except Islam or death. The carnage at Debāl, the first Indian city to fall under Muslim rule, lasted for three full days.35 It did not take long for the Arabs to realize the utter folly of this policy which had succeeded in other lands. The matter was referred to al-Ḥajjāj and the latter had no hesitation in granting the exemption to the Hindus. "Permission is given to them to worship their gods. Nobody must be forbidden or

34 Introduction to Elliot and Dowson, p. 59

^{35 &}quot;At Debal, the temples were demolished, and mosques founded; a general massacre endured for three whole days; prisoners were taken captive; plunder was amassed; and an apostate was left in charge of the government, exercising co-ordinate jurisdiction with an Arab chief." – Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 469

prevented from following his own religion. They may prevented their houses in whatever manner they like."36 Thus the first exception to the application of the Mus-Thus the non-Muslims was sanctioned. As admitted by Sir William Muir,

...in India there was an altogether new departure in the treatment of the subject races. Idolatory was tolerated. Temples were left standing, and their worship not disallowed.37

When fire and sword failed, inducements were offered to the inhabitants of Sindh to change their creed. Muhammad bin Qāsim's policy was -

Those who embraced the Muhammadan faith were exempted from slavery, the tribute, and the poll-tax; and from those who did not change their creed, a tax was exacted according to three grades. 38

The lowest of these grades was silver equal to twelve dirhams in weight. The amount was by no means inconsiderable. No wonder then many of the poorer sections of Hindu society might have accepted the Islamic faith to escape "...the material punishment and moral and social humiliation of the jiziyah upon the non-Muslims..."39 But Hinduism had not yet lost its earlier virility and, as pointed out earlier in the chapter, most of these neo-converts took the earliest opportunity to go back to their original fold. Even as late as tenth century

³⁶ Ibid., p. 186

³⁷ Muir, William. The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall. Edinburgh: John Grant, 1924. p. 354

³⁸ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 182

³⁹ Saran, Paramatma. Studies in Medieval Indian History. Delhi: Ranjit Printers and Publishers, 1952. p. 139

CE, an Arab geographer "...complains that Islam had not made a single convert in India." In the northwest, the city of Kābul continued to remain preponderantly Hindu long after its first Muslim occupation by Ya'qūb ibn Lāyth in 870 CE. The fact is corroborated by the tenth century Arab traveller, al-Iṣṭakhrī, who says that though the castle was occupied by the Musalmāns, "...it has a town, in which are infidels from Hind."

Then came the invasions of Sultān Maḥmūd in the early eleventh century, and Hinduism faced the greatest trial of her long and chequered history. Maḥmūd's secretary, al-'Utbī frankly admits,

'Islam or death' was the alternative he (Maḥmūd) placed before the people. 42

While describing the conquest of Thanesar, al-'Utbī writes,

The blood of the infidels flowed so copiously, that the stream was discoloured, notwithstanding its purity, and people were unable to drink it...⁴³

Such wholesale massacres followed every invasion of Maḥmūd and embracing of Islam was the only means to escape it. Al-'Utbī describes the mass conversion of Hara-datta of Baran and his ten thousand followers "...

⁴⁰ Nainar, S Muhammad Husayn. Arab Geographers' Knowledge of Southern India. Madras, University of Madras, 1942. p. 108 Cited by A B M Habibullah in The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1945) on p. 1

⁴¹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 412

⁴² Sharma, Sri Ram. Studies in Medieval Indian History. Sholapur: Institute of Public Administration, 1956. p. 61 [Translated from the original Arabic chronicle Tārīķ-i-Yamini of Abū al-Nasr 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Utbī. —Ed.]

⁴³ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 40

eagerly seeking conversion to Islam and renouncing idol worship."⁴⁴ But the majoriy of the Hindus did not like to give up their religion even at the cost of their lives. A large number of such unfortunate Hindus were carried away as slaves. Al-'Utbī's account is full of references to such mass enslavement —

...slaves were so plentiful that they became very cheap; and men of respectability in their native land were degraded by becoming slaves of common shopkeepers. 45

This inhuman practice of mass enslavement of prisoners of war and their forcible conversion to Islam was continued by Qutb al-Dīn Aybak and subsequent Muslim rulers right up to the times of Akbar, who stopped it early in his reign. However, it must be mentioned that such mass enslavement and forcible conversions were not resorted to during peace-time. Even Maḥmūd Ghaznī seems to have relented in his attitude towards the Hindus towards the end of his rule. The same considerations which had earlier led Muḥammad bin Qāsim and al-Ḥajjāj to grant concessions to Hindus might have impelled Maḥmūd to enlist the Hindus in his armies. And as Sir Wolseley Haig points out, "...there is no reason to believe that conversion was a condition for their service." 46

Tilak, the leader of the Hindu contingent employed by Maḥmūd Ghaznāvī, rose to eminence under Sultān Maḥmūd, and al-Bayhaqī informs us that "...Amír Mah-

⁴⁴ Sharma, Sri Ram. Studies in Medieval Indian History. Sholapur: Institute of Public Administration, 1956. p. 58 [Translated from the Täriķ-i-Yaminī of al-'Utbī. —Ed.]

⁴⁵ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 39

⁴⁶ The Cambridge History of India. Vol. 3. Ed. Haig, Wolseley. Cambridge: University Press, 1928. p. 27

múd wanted such persons."⁴⁷ His services continued to be prized under the successors of Maḥmūd and he and his Hindu soldiers were sent to suppress the rebellion of Aḥmad Nīāl-tigīn, the Governor of Punjab. Evidently, the iconoclastic zeal of the early Muslim rulers in India was soon supplanted by the imperialist desire for the stability of their kingdom which was impossible without the active support or at least, willing sufferance of the Hindus, who continued to constitute the majority of their subjects throughout the long duration of the Muslim rule in India.

In the catalogue of the coins of the Indian Museum (by Chas. J. Rodgers, Calcutta, 1896, pp. 160–161) three coins of Bahrām Shāh [who ruled from 1118 to 1152] are mentioned... [Two] coins (Nos. 13167 and 8952), like those of the previous Ghaznavide rulers, contained on the reverse the image of a bull (or cow?) and the inscriptions "Shri Samanta Deva" in Sanskrit, and these must have been used in India alone. 48

This is at once a proof of the tolerant policy of the later Ghaznavide rulers of India as well as a tribute to the deep-rooted cultural heritage of Indians which compelled the former to adopt such a policy.

The last of the Muslim invaders of our period Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad Ghūrī, was the least religious minded of them all. The territory of Ghūr had for long been the centre of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Even when Muḥammad ascended the throne of Ghaznī in 1173 CE, he was

Islamic Culture. Vol. 23, No. 1/2. Hyderabad: The Islamic Culture

Board, 1949. p. 80

⁴⁷ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 128 (Citing the Tārīķ-us-Subūk-tigīn of Abu'l-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī)
48 Khan, Ghulam Mustafa. 'A History of Bahrām Shāh of Ghaznīn.'

not an orthodox Muslim but a follower of the Kirāmia sect. 49 According to Prof. Habib,

...it was, roughly speaking, a half-way house between Islam and popular Buddhism. It imagined that Allah was seated on the upper portion of the Arsh (Throne) just as the Buddha is depicted as sitting on the lotus. 50

It was only in deference to the wishes of the citizens of Ghazni that Muhammad Ghūrī got himself converted to the Hanafi School of Sunni Law.

This liberal religious outlook of the Shansabani-s distinguished them from their predecessors and was perhaps a major factor in their success in implanting the Muslim rule in India on a permanent basis. While occasionally swayed by religious sentiments, the invasions of the Ghorides were not motivated by religious zeal or proselytizing fervour. They were mostly guided by political motives and the first conflict of Muhammad Ghūrī on Indian soil was with the Muslim Qarāmiṭah chief of Mūltān. He faced the Muslim rulers of both Mültän and the Punjab with the same tenacity and determinitation that he displayed against the Hindu kings. With remarkable absence of any religious prejudice, both Mu'izz al-Dīn and his lieutenant, Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak, entered into a series of compromises with the Hindus.

Aybak is reported to have "...employed Hindu cavalry..."51 The Ghoride successes were not followed by

⁴⁹ See supra Chapter 6. Resistance to the Ghorides

⁵⁰ Introduction to Elliot and Dowson, p. 94

⁵¹ Tārīkh-i Fakhr al-Din Mubārak Shāh, p. 33

Cited on p. 182 of The Delhi Sultanat (A.D. 1206-1526). 'A Comprehensive History of India' (Vol. 5). Eds. Habib, Mohammad and Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1970

acts of religious fanaticism or vindictiveness. He even avoided abrupt changes in the conquered territories. Delhi was allowed to be governed by Govinda-rājā's son and the administration of Ajmer was entrusted to Pṛthvi-rājā's son on conditions of vassalage. Even when Aybak decided to take over the direct administration of Ajmer, he compensated the prince by placing him in charge of Ranthambhor. Of course, it will be idle to imagine that the Ghoride policy towards the Hindus represented a complete break from the past. Hasan Nizāmī informs us that in Gujarat in 1197, "...nearly fifty thousand infidels were despatched to hell by the sword... More than twenty thousand slaves, and twenty elephants, and cattle and arms beyond all calculation, fell into the hands of the victors."52 Similarly at Kāliñjar, the same author informs us -

The temples were converted into mosques and abodes of goodness...and the very name of idolatory was annihilated.

Fifty thousand men came under the collar of slavery, and the plain became black as pitch with Hindús.53

But this was the least that could be expected from a medieval Muslim invader and it can be safely assumed that the rare political expediency displayed by the Ghorides was a major factor in the gradual stabilization of their rule in India. Later Muslim rulers of the Sultanate period, with a few exceptions54, avoided taking

⁵² Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 230 (Citing the Tāju'l Ma'āsir of Nizāmu'd-Dīn Ḥasan Nizāmī)

^{54 [}For instance, Fīrūz Shāh Tughlāq (1309-88) declares in his Futūḥāt-i Fīrūz Shāhī, "I made an announcement that whoever from amongst the kafirs recites the kalimah and embraces Islam, the

extreme measures to eliminate the religious and cultural identity of the Hindus, much to the chagrin of the orthodox Ulemās. The advice of Wazīr Nizām-u'l-Mulk Junaidi to Iltutmish, advising him against following a policy of 'death or Islam' towards the Hindus is worth

...at the moment India has newly been conquered and the Muslims are so few that they are like salt (in a large dish). If the above orders are to be applied to the Hindus, it is possible they might combine and a general confusion might ensue and the Muslims would be too few in number to suppress this general confusion. However, after a few years when in the Capital and in the regions and the small towns, the Muslims are well established and the troops are larger, it will be possible to give Hindus, the choice of 'death' or 'Islam'...55

The disastrous consequences of putting back this process of liberalism, four and a half centuries later, by Aurangzīb, the last of the great Mughals, are quite obvious.

Now we should take up the other aspect of Indian resistance—political and militaristic—to the early Muslim invaders. While analyzing the reasons for the ultimate breakdown of such resistance in the last decade of the twelfth century CE, we should not allow ourselves to forget that in the previous five centuries, a very stout

jiziyah should not be realized from him." - Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961) on p. 315 in fn. 1. —Ed.]

⁵⁵ Sana-i-Muhammadi (Rampur ms.)

Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961) on pp. 315-16

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resistance was offered by the Indians, the likes of which the Arabs and the Turks had not encountered in their conquests of the countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe. Statements like those of Prof. Habib make us lose sight of the correct perspective —

Seldom in human history has a country so large, so populous and, according to the academic standards of the age, so cultured and civilized as far as the upper classes were concerned, been conquered so easily—and by such commonplace men.⁵⁶

Again,

...the cities of northern India, as we have seen, fell like autumnal leaves.⁵⁷

Such statements do scant justice even to the last phase of Indian resistance. Even after the victory of Tarā'īn in 1192, Muhammad Ghūrī had no easy access to Delhi. Repeated risings around Delhi and Ajmer went on for about a decade before the Muslim rule could settle down in these places.

In this connection, the observation of A L Srivastava can be pertinently quoted –

Modern writers of Indian history, whether Europeans or Indians, have overlooked the earlier resistance put up by the Hindus and in analysing the causes of the Indian defeat have concentrated their attention only on the last phase of the struggle. 58

57 Ibid., p. 51

⁵⁶ Introduction to Elliot and Dowson, p. 50

⁵⁸ Srivastava, A L. 'A Survey of India's Resistance to Medieval Invaders from the North-West: Causes of Eventual Hindu Defeat.' Quarterly Review of Historical Studies. Vol. 2. Calcutta: Institute of Historical Studies, 1963–64. pp. 172. ff [Also published in Journal of Indian History, Vol. 43 (1965) —Ed.]

Thus the study of the causes of eventual failure of the Hindu States in the correct perspective demands a review of their earlier resistance which lasted as long as five hundred and seventy years, starting from the Arab naval expedition against Thana during the Caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb in 15 H. (636 CE).

This entire period can be conveniently divided into four distinct epochs and it has to be remembered that the nature of the struggle and the reasons for the defeat of the Hindus were not the same through all these dif-

ferent epochs.

The first epoch consists of the protracted struggle between the Arabs and the Hindu kingdom of Sindh. The struggle lasted for as many as seventy-five years before Muhammad bin Qasim succeeded in conquering the outlying Hindu kingdom in 712 CE. As is evident from the detailed account given earlier,59 the Arabs kept up, almost unbroken, their attempts to conquer the kingdom throughout this period. They concentrated on Makrān (modern Balochistan) and Kīkānān, a hilly region round the Bolan Pass. But the hardy mountaineers hardly allowed them any notable success in this region. The significance of this brave resistance lasting for seventy-five years is further augmented by the fact that the Arabs, during this period commanded the resources of the largest and most powerful empire of the medieval ages. Other States and towns of the three continents had fallen before their might "...like ninepins."60

There were a number of reasons for the ultimate failure of King Dāhir and his men to prevent final oc-

⁵⁹ See supra Chapter 2. Invasion of Sindh by the Arabs
60 Hitti, Philip K. History of the Arabs. Third edition. London: Macmillan and Co., 1946, p. 150

cupation of Sindh by the Arabs in 712-13 CE. The foremost among them was that the Arab force sent along with Muḥammad bin Qāsim was greately superior in men and material to those of Dāhir. The number of forces under Muḥammad bin Qāsim when he began his conquest of Sindh, numbered no less than twenty-five thousand men and it included the flower of the Caliph's army together with five catapults, the heavy machines which had been used by the Prophet and done effective service in the conquest of Damascus, Mecca, and Northern Africa.⁶¹ In each of the forts of Debāl, Nerūn. and Sehwan, Qāsim was opposed by forces which numbered less than a quarter of the Arab army.

"As the news of Muhammad Kásim's success reached Damascus, he was joined by other troops and adventurers eager for plunder and proselytism...62

Both the Tarikh al-hind wa al-sind [Chach-nāmah] and the Tuhfātu-l Kirām state that "...he had no less than 50,000 men marching under his standard, besides those whom he had left in the forts and garrisons of Sind..."63 when he left Mültan for the conquest of Dipalpur and the north.

Among other reasons may be mentioned the lack of social solidarity among the subjects of Dāhir, some of the Jāț-s and Mīd-s, who smarted under the inhibitions and humiliations imposed upon them, joined Muḥammad bin Qāsim, although, the latter also was impelled to impose the same conditions upon them after his victory.64 Many of the Buddhists and traders refused

⁶¹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 435

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 187 (Citing the Chach-nāmah)

to fight and supplied valuable information to Qāsim's forces. At Debāl, a brāhmaṇa came to betray his coun-

trymen.

Dāhir himself, though not lacking in courage, daring, or defiance of death paved the way for his own downfall by his silly mistakes. To prevent the working of a prediction, he had solemnized his marriage with his own sister. The marriage was not consummated as it was not intended to be, but it alienated from him his brother and other right-minded people. This very incident caused by his faith in astrology was utilised as an excuse by his feudatories and even relations to desert his cause.⁶⁵

Finally, Dāhir allowed the outlying places and forts to fall into the hands of the enemy. He waited till the Arab army had reached Raor [today's Nawabshah], and like the Rājpūt kings of the later period, staked his all on a single battle. Like his successors too, he entered the thick of the battle instead of supervising his army from behind and paid the extreme penalty.

But the conquest of Sindh can in no way be regarded as a proof of military superiority of the Arabs over the Indians. As R C Majumdar points out, "...the conquest of Sindh was the first and the last great achievement of the Arabs in India." As pointed out earlier, all attempts of the Arabs to expand their dominations

⁶⁵ The Chachnamah, An Ancient History of Sind. Tr. Fredunbeg, Mirza Kalichbeg. Karachi: Commissioners Press, 1900. pp. 106–7 [Translated from the Persian treatise Tārikh al-hind wa al-sind whose authorship is unknown. —Ed.]

⁶⁶ Majumdar, R C. The Classical Age. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 3). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1954. p. 175

⁶⁷ See supra Chapter 2. Invasion of Sindh by the Arabs

in India were resolutely and effectively checked by the powerful Indian States of the time and their hold over Sindh too was reduced to the two small principalities of Mūltān and Mansūrah. Only the religious credulity of the Indians prevented them from liquidating these Arab pockets in Sindh.⁶⁸ When compared with the wonderful military exploits of the Arabs in other lands, their achievements in India appear most insignificant.

The second great epoch of Indian resistance envisaged a long and protracted struggle between the mighty Arabs, later on the Turks, and the tiny Hindu States of Kābul and Zābul. The struggle began in 643 CE, when with the conquest of Persia by the Arabs, the territories of the Caliphate touched the western frontiers of Kābul and Zābul. The Arabs started their attempts to conquer the Hindu kingdoms in right earnest but even after a prolonged aggression lasting more than two hundred and twenty years, they failed to achieve their objective.

Mas'údí [al-Mas'ūdī] in his chapter in the Murúj, which is consecrated to the kings of Syria, makes mention of a prince who reigned in the valley of the Indus, and who after having subjugated Eastern Persia, advanced to the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. The name of this prince was Ranbal, under one of its various modifications, and he adds that the name formed in his time the designation of the indigenous princes of the country, and he calls the Buddhist princes of Kábul by this epithet, which he makes common to all.⁶⁹

The epic struggle between the army of the Caliphs and Ranbal or the princes of Kābul "...seems to have invested the prince of Kábul with a fictitious celebrity,

⁶⁸ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 23 (Citing al-Mas'ūdi)

⁶⁹ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 418

insomuch that he is the hero of many Arab stories of the holy wars on the frontiers of Hind."70

But what the armed power of the Arabs could not achieve, was accomplished by the founder of the Turkachieve, was accomplished by the Lāyth in 867 CE. The Hindu kingdom of Kābul was riven by internal dissensions at this time. The kṣatriya ruler Lagatūrmān, had been deposed by the brāhmaṇa minister Lallya alias Kallār only a year earlier. Ya'qūb might have taken full advantage of these dissensions but what really gave him victory was the use of downright treachery and deception against his unsuspecting Hindu neighbour. Even the medieval Muslim historian, Nūr-ud-dīn Muḥammad 'Awfī, considers the victory, "...the result of treachery and deception, such as no one had ever committed."

The third great epoch of Indian resistance to Muslim invaders starts in 963 CE, when the Turkish slave of the Sāmānīd king of Khurāsān, Alb-tigīn established himself at Ghaznī. This was the start of the prolonged warfare between the Ghaznavide rulers and Indian kings. The brunt of the attack was borne by the Shāhi king, Jaya-pāla, who even invaded Ghaznī in 986 CE, to put an end to the aggressive policy of Subūk-tigīn. Due to a heavy storm, he had to fall back.

In 1000 CE, Maḥmūd began his Indian depredations and three generations of Shāhi kings sacrificed themselves in trying to stem the tide of the Turkish invasion. Jaya-pāla could not beat the indignity of defeat and committed suicide in 1001 CE. Ānanda-pāla died fight-

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 417

⁷¹ For details, see supra Chapter 3. The Heroic Defence of Kābul and Zābul

⁷² Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 178 (Citing the Jawami ul-Hikāyāt of Nūr-ud-dīn Muḥammad 'Awfī)

ing in 1009 CE, and Trilocana-pāla died around 1019 CE in the same manner.

It will be wrong to say that the rulers of Hindustān were not wide awake to the dangers facing the country. Twice did not Indian rulers form a confederacy to put an end to the menace posed by the rise of the Turkish power? Firiṣta informs us that the *rājās* of Delhi, Ajmer, Kāliñjar, and many other neighbouring countries supplied contingents to help Jaya-pāla after the sudden storm had frustrated his first attempt to crush Subūk-tigīn's power.

But the brave and prolonged resistance of the Shāhi-s, Mahmūd's failure to penetrate into Kāśmīr or conquer Kāliñjar, and his hasty retreat from Somnath - all these cannot detract from the fact that Mahmūd was one of the greatest generals of his age. The shock tactics applied by him and the rapidity of his movements really created an impression that his armies were invincible not only in India but also in the lands of Central Asia. The fact that the success of Mahmud was primarily due to the consummate skill and generalship displayed by him was proved by the failure of his successors to extend the area of their dominions in the Punjab. Within fifteen years of Mahmud's death, the Ghaznavides were pushed to the Rāvī and in spite of their repeated attempts, Mahmūd's successors could not extend their dominions beyond that river for the next one hundred and fifty years.

The fourth epoch of Indian resistance starts in 1175, when Shihāb ad-Dīn alias Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad bin Sām Ghūrī, the ruler of Ghaznī, started on his Indian conquest. Militarily, he was not of the same calibre as Maḥmūd of Ghaznī. Unlike the latter too,

Muḥammad Ghūrī was defeated twice in India, once by the Caulukya-s in 1178, and once by the Cāhamāṇa-s in 1191. And yet he succeeded finally in establishing Muslim rule in Delhi and the Doab. With the defeat of pṛthvī-rājā III in 1192, and Jaya-candra Gāhaḍavā-la two years later, organised resistance to the invaders almost collapsed. Though the Cāhamāṇa-s staged a number of uprisings they failed to dislodge the Muslims from the Indian heartland. For sometime, the Caulukyan king, Bhīma II tried to assume leadership of the Indian resistance but with the defeat in 1197, and the temporary occupation of Aṇhilvāḍa by the Muslims, he was obliged to give up that role. In turn, the rulers of Gujarat too were left untouched by the Muslim rulers for almost the whole of the thirteenth century.⁷³

It has to be borne in mind, however, that the history of Indian—or rather Hindu—resistance to Muslim rule does not come to a stop in 1206 CE. Even in Northern India, Assam stayed independent throughout the five centuries of Muslim rule, Odisha remained so for more than three and a half centuries, Malwa and Gujarat for almost the whole of the thirteenth century, and above all, the flame of independence remained lit up in the forts, hills, and desert plains of Rājpūtāna, where forts and kingdoms were lost and conquered again and again.

^{73 [}Hindu resid

^{73 [}Hindu resistance to early Islamic invaders is noteworthy both for quantity and quality; it spanned five hundred and seventy years and for a considerable part, was against the mightiest forces in the world at that point of time. Sita Ram Goel writes, "The Ghaznavids and the Ghurids in this story are not rulers of small principalities; they are formidable powers with the resources of vast empires at their disposal." – p. 18 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) —Ed.]

However, the significance of what happened in 1206 CE, cannot be minimised. The Muslim invaders secured a firm foothold over the main cities and strongholds of the Indo-Gangetic plain and the Hindus could never again for the next five centuries—except perhaps once in the first quarter of the sixteenth century (under the leadership of Rāṇā Saṅgrām Siṅgh)—pose a serious challenge to this Muslim foothold in India.

What led to this ultimate collapse of organised Hindu resistance and the establishment of Delhi Sultanate in 1206? The question has exercised the ingenuity of historians for a long time. The contemporary medieval historians like Hasan Nizāmī and Minhāj-i-Sirāj ascribe the victory of Islam only to the grace of Almighty God, which is not particularly helpful in analysing the real causes of Muslim success. British historians, on the other hand, have propounded a theory of racial superiority of the Arabs and Turks over the Hindus as far as martial qualities are concerned. Mountstuart Elphinstone writes about the army of Muḥammad Ghūrī,

As his army was drawn from all the warlike provinces between the Indus and Oxus, and was accustomed to contend with the Seljúks and the northern hordes of Tartars, we should not expect it to meet much resitance from a people naturally gentle and inoffensive, broken into small states, and forced into war without any hopes of gain or aggrandizement...⁷⁴

In a similar vein, Vincent Smith writes,

The men (Muslims) came from a cool climate in hilly regions, and were for the most part heavier and phys-

⁷⁴ Elphinstone, Mountstuart. History of India: The Hindu and Mahomedan Periods. London: John Murray, 1874. p. 361

ically stronger than their opponents. Their flesh diet as compared with the vegetarian habits prevalent in India, combined with their freedom from the restrictions of caste rules concerning food, tended to develop the kind of energy required by an invading force. 75

This theory is obviously based on the presumption that India was swiftly and easily conquered by the virile races of the north, which is completely baseless. Such prolonged and sustained resistance as offered by the Indians was not faced by the Arabs and the Turks in any other part of the world. The entire history of India's resistance to foreign invaders, covered in the previous pages, bears incontestable testimony to the fact that Indians, at all times, knew well how to fight bravely and die for their country. Bravery, courage, or martial spirit were certainly not the qualities that were lacking in them.

Soldier to soldier, a Rajput, a Punjabi warrior or a Gujarati horseman, was a match against his opposite number in the armies of Islam.⁷⁶

Equally unhistorical is the attribution of the Muslim success to the invaders' iconoclastic or religious zeal. As discussed earlier in the chapter, Muḥammad Ghūrī,

⁷⁵ Smith, Vincent A. The Oxford History of India: From the Earliest Times to the end of 1911. Oxford: Oxford University, 1923. p. 257 [Smith goes on to write, "Their fierce fanaticism, which regarded the destruction of millions of non-Muslims as a service eminently pleasing to God, made them absolutely pitiless, and consequently far more terrifying than the ordinary enemies met in India." In addition to this, the Islamic invaders thoroughly lacked scruples with regard to warfare, which indeed was the prescribed method in their holy book when it came to dealing with infidels. —Ed.] 76 Sharma, Sri Ram. Studies in Medieval Indian History. Sholapur: Institute of Public Administration, 1956. p. 15

who actually succeeded in establishing Muslim rule in India's heartland, was the least religious-minded of all the early Muslim invaders. Sir Jadunath Sarkar points out that Islam bred among its followers intense "...fatalism, springing from an absolute reliance on God and the belief that what Allah wills must triumph over evey human effort. This bred contempt of death in fighting."⁷⁷

As pointed out earlier, however, this contempt of death was not the sole preserve of the followers of Islam and in itself is a lame explanation of their success in India. Zakarīyā' ibn Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī of Persia, writing in his Āthār al-Bilād (c. 1263), says about Somnath in 1025–26 CE,

The Indians made a desperate resistance. They would go weeping and crying for help into the temple, and then issue forth and fight till all were killed. The number of the slain exceeded 50,000.78

Such mass defiance of death even when there was no hope of victory will be hard to find in the annals of world history.

But rich plunder acted as a good supplement to the religious zeal of the Muslims. The Muslim practice of dividing the spoils of war between the leader and the soldiers might have encouraged the soldiers to follow their leaders through thick and thin. The temple forts which guarded treasures of Hindu rulers became the chief targets of the Muslim invaders.

78 Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 98 (Citing the Athar al-Bilad of Zakariyā' ibn Muḥammad al-Qazwinī)

⁷⁷ Sarkar, Jadunath. Military History of India. Calcutta: M C Sarkar and Sons, 1960. p. 26

Another much exaggerated reason for the defeat of the Hindus is their caste-system. It is claimed -

The bulk of the Indian population was apathetic towards the fortunes of the ruling dynasties. No appeal from the Rajput governing classes could possibly receive sympathetic response from the vast mass of Indian population because there was no unifying bond, no idea of 'social oneness,' no spirit of 'common citizenship' and no 'national consciousness' [among the Hindus then].⁷⁹

prof. Habib too holds that the iniquitous social system of the Hindus, which assigned the untouchables and the entire city labour an object position outside the city-walls, was primarily responsible for their failure. The whole of this section [apparently] stages "...a sudden turn-over..." to the Muslims and facilitated their success.

That Hindus lacked social solidarity may be admitted, but such sweeping remarks are historically unwarranted and as Paramatma Saran points out, "...based on no sure knowledge of facts..." Al-Bīrūnī nowhere mentions that the entire city's labour-force was made to live outside the cities. He enumerates only eight guilds who lived "...near the villages and towns of the four castes but outside them." He says, "These eight guilds are the fuller, shoemaker, juggler, the basket and shield maker, the sailor, the fisherman, the hunter of

⁷⁹ Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century. Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961. p. 79

⁸⁰ Introduction to Elliot and Dowson, p. 52

⁸¹ Saran, Paramatma and Majumdar, R. C. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R. C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 126 82 Alberuni's India, Vol. 1, p. 101

wild animals and of birds, and the weaver."83 There is no reason to suppose that such treatment was meted out to all other working-class guilds, who along with the śūdras lived an integrated corporate life inside the cities and villages. Though morally indefensible, the attitude of the high-caste Hindus towards the eight guilds or the untouchables - Hādī, Doma or Domba, Candāla, and Bhadatau (according to al-Bīrūnī84) was dictated solely by an exaggerated sense of cleanliness, which is still the rage of the orthodox Hindus. Even Qutb al-Din Aybak "...thought of shifting the tanners of hide (dabbagh) to some distant quarter of the city,-on purely hygienic grounds..."85 Probably his early death prevented him from carrying out the project.

It will not be out of place of mention some modern foreign scholars' opinion on the social life of ancient India. A L Basham's impression is -

...in no other part of the ancient world were the relations of man and man, and of man and the state, so fair and humane. In no other early civilization were slaves so few in number, and in no other lawbook are their rights so well protected as in the Arthaśāstra. No other ancient lawgiver proclaimed such noble ideals of fair play in battle as did Manu. In all her history of warfare Hindu India has few tales to tell of cities put to the sword or of the massacre of non-combatants...the most striking feature of ancient Indian civilization is its humanity.86

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Futūḥu's-Salāṭīn [Shāh-nāmah-i ḥind] of 'Iṣāmī, pp. 105-7. Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century. Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim Uni-

⁸⁶ Basham, A L. The Wonder that was India. London: Sigwick and Jackson, 1954. pp. 8-9

Sūdras in the early Rājpūt period could even at-Suarus imperial position. The ruler of Sindh at the time tain imperate travels was probably a śūdra.87 With agorg Xuanzang's was probably a świetnie was prob of Xuanzaro With agriculture, cattle-rearing, and crafts as their recognised riculture, they constituted the core of the Indian professions, Madhātithi's comments. profession. Medhātithi's commentary on the Manu-smṛti concedes the sudras the right to private property and freedom from attending on the three other castes.88 recuonaries castes. Sumāra-pāla, the Caulukyan king, appointed a potter, Sajjana, as Governor of Chittor. 89 Had it not been so, the śūdras, who still constitute a large segment of Hindu society, would not have chosen to remain in the Hindu fold, even when 'the gates of heaven' had been opened to them by Islam. Also there is no evidence to show that for reasons of caste any desertions to the side of Muslims from the side of Hindu armies took place at any time.

In the absence of such conclusive evidence, the caste [varna] system can, at best, be assigned only a secondary place among the reasons of Muslim success in India. The Brahmanical reaction that the county witnessed during this period at least contributed to the

Bhavan, 1944. p. 221

^{87 [}Xuanzang mentions śūdra rulers in North India; the Nandas, imperial rulers of Magadha, were also of śūdra extraction, writes Dasharatha Sharma in Early Chauhan Dynasties (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1959) on p. 247 in fn. 53. —Ed.]

^{88 [}Dasharatha Sharma cites Manu-smrti verses 3.156 and 8.415 on p. 247 in fn. 54 (Ibid.) For an English translation of Manu-smrti with Medhātithi's commentary, one may refer to Mahā-mahopādhyaya Ganganatha Jha's magnum-opus Manu-smrti: The Laws of Manu, with the Bhasya of Medhatithi published by the University of Calcutta in five volumes. For verse 3.156, see Vol. 2, Part 1, pp. 178-79; for verse 8.415, see Vol. 4, Part 2, pp. 431-33 —Ed.] 89 'Bharatiya Vidya' (English edition). Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya

In the former, the *brāhmaṇa* minister, Chāch deposed and killed his śūdra master and declared himself king around 650 CE. This alienated the sympathies of the Buddhists and Jāṭ-s who might have felt oppressed at this rise of orthodox Hinduism. Similarly, Kallār or Lallya, the *brāhmaṇa* minister of the last *kṣatriya* ruler of Kābul, Lagatūrmān deposed his master and declared himself king around 870 CE. The internal dessensions were fully exploited by the Ṣaffārīd ruler, Ya'qūb ibn Lāyth, who invaded and through a ruse, overthrew the Hindu rule in Kābul and Zābul within a year of the dynastic revolution.

The disastrous effect of the caste system on the military strength of the Hindus cannot be overlooked. A large section of Hindu society kept itself away from the fighting profession. The fighting class consisted mostly of Rājpūt-s [kṣatriyas in general] and a small number of brāhmaṇas. Pṛthvī-rājā had a brāhmaṇa general, Skanda. When this fighting class was defeated, organised resistance virtually ceased. Dasharatha Sharma writes,

The priestly classes [brāhmaṇas] generally resisted only when it came to the destruction of the temples where they officiated. The traders [vaisyas] perhaps resisted even less. All they wanted was a settled government, and generally they were the first to come to terms with the alien government. (See for instance the Jaina inscriptions referring themselves to the "reign" of Alp Khān – Prāchīna-Gurjara-kāvya-saṅgraha, Appendices vII and

⁹⁰ Srivastava, A L. 'A Survey of India's Resistance to Medieval Invaders from the North-West: Causes of Eventual Hindu Defeat.' Quarterly Review of Historical Studies. Vol. 2. Calcutta: Institute of Historical Studies, 1963–64. pp. 172. ff [Also published in Journal of Indian History, Vol. 43 (1965) —Ed.]

VIII). As to the depressed classes [śūdras], which have always constituted a very large percentage of the Indian population, what interest could they have in the perpetuation of a political system in which they had plenty of duties but very few rights? [And even if they wished to fight, they were not trained for the task.] When big kingdoms fall, one after the other, in their fight against a common enemy, obviously, it is not the political leaders alone, but the whole social system and its inadequate adjustment to changing conditions that is at fault. 91

The degradation of the religious and moral life of the people must also share the blame for the downfall of the Hindu States. The belief in superstitions and astrology brought about the downfall of Dāhir's kingdom. The defenders of Debal lost heart when the stone missile struck the flagstaff of the temple. Dāhir himself had alienated the sympathies of his people by marrying his own sister to ward off an imaginary evil. Even his relatives refused to fight for his cause because the astrologers had predicted the downfall of his kingdom.92 Laksmana-sena of Bengal was content to perform a great yajña, Aindrī Mahā-śānti, to please the Gods for helping him avert the impending catastrophe.93 The classic example of the Muslims exploiting this religious credulousness of the Hindus is provided by the Arab travellers of the tenth century - al-Mas'ūdī, al-Iṣṭakhrī,

⁹¹ Sharma, Dasharatha. Early Chauhan Dynasties. Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1959. pp. 323-24

⁹² The Chachnamah, An Ancient History of Sind. Tr. Fredunbeg, Mirza Kalichbeg. Karachi: Commissioners Press, 1900. pp. 106-7 [Translated from the Persian treatise Tārīkh al-hind wa al-sind whose authorship is unknown. —Ed.]

⁹³ Bhattasali, N K. 'The Rājāvāḍī (Bhāwāl) Plate of Lakṣmaṇa Sena Deva'. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. Vol. 8 (1942). Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1943. pp. 17-21

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and ibn Ḥawqal – all of whom are unanimous in declaring that but for the fear of the destruction of the idol of Mūltān, the Indians would destroy Mūltān.

The degradation of the morals of the people, especially of the upper and middle classes, is portrayed in contemporary art and literature.94 The literary works of Ksemendra and Soma-deva, both eleventh century Sanskrit authors, tell us about the low depths to which the standard of social morality had sunk. The voluminous Kathā-sarit-sāgara of Soma-deva is full of "...stories of faithful and adulterous women, of fools and rogues, thieves and gamblers, false ascetics and forest tribes. Wonderful events and feats of adventure are found in abundance, and magic and witchcraft are a matter of everyday routine."95 Tāntrika Śaivisim, Vajrāyana Buddhism, and the [tāntrika] Sahajiyā sect of Vaisnavism depicted the degrading evils of the contemporary social life. The life of ease and luxury led by the Raiput kings and their nobles did contribute in some measure to their defeat. Prthví-rājā III, who led a polygamous life, passed the night preceding the Second Battle of Tarā'in in revelry and merrymaking.96 According to the

^{94 [}All through this line of argument—i.e., 'the degradation of the morals of the people'—although the author is quite prudish, there is no hiding from the fact that Hindu rulers of that era had become complacent and lacked a pan-Indian political vision. Only a handful seem to have been aware of the lasting dangers of Islam.—Ed.] 95 Mehandale, M A and Pusalker, A D. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 314 96 Briggs, John. History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India Till the Year A.D. 1612. Vol. 1. Calcutta: R Cambray & Co., 1908. p. 176 [Translated from the original Persian treatise Tārīķ-i-Firiṣta of Muḥammad-Kāsim Hindu-shāh Astarābādī "Firiṣta."—Ed.] [Hereafter referred to as: Tārīķ-i-Firiṣta]

Hammira-mahā-kāvya [of Naya-candra Sūrī], Pṛthvī-rājā's brother Hari-rājā was defeated by the Muslims rājā's brother Hari-rājā was defeated by the Muslims rājā's brother Hari-rājā was defeated by the Muslims because he began to lead a life of indulgence in the because he because he began to lead a life of indulgence in the because he began to lead a life of indulgence in the because he because he began to lead a life of indulgence he because he began to lead a life of indulgence he because he because he began to lead a life of indulgence he because he beca

...the Hindus are not very severe in punishing whoredom. The fault, however, in this lies with the kings, not with the nation. But for this, no Brahman or priest would suffer in their idol-temples the women who sing, dance, and play. The kings make them an attraction for their cities, a bait of pleasure for their subjects, for no other but financial reasons. By the revenues which they derive from the business both as fines and taxes, they want to recover the expenses which their treasury has to spend on the army. 99

There is an epigraphic evidence to prove that Rājā Jojala-deva of Naddūla (Nadol) ordered the courtesans to join the procession of all temples of Nadol. He even issued direction to punish learned men, old people, and others who tried to interfere in the observance of this custom. 100

⁹⁷ Hammira-mahā-kāvya 4.2—16

⁹⁸ Tărik-i-Firișta, pp. 169–70

⁹⁹ Sachau, Edward C. Alberuni's India. Vol. 2. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1910. p. 157 [Translation of the Kitāb allind of al-Birūni]

¹⁰⁰ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. 11. Ed. Hultzsch, E. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1911-12. pp. 26-28

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The same decay in public morals is witnessed in contemporary architecture. The obscene images of the temples of Khajuraho, Puri, Konark, and the caves of Bhubaneshwar tell their own tale. Hence the decaying social system of the Hindus explains why no successful resistance could be offered against the Muslims once the field army was defeated. The defence of the kingdom was considered to be the sole responsibility of the professional soldier and the rest of society busied itself in the pursuit of wordly gains and sensual pleasures. The rulers, instead of trying to check the social vices, encouraged them for their own personal benefit.

As regards the defects of the political system of the Hindu States, much has been written which does not stand the test of a careful scrutiny of the available historical data. It has been claimed —

National consciousness, love of country, and pride of freedom were smothered under the weight of a mass of rituals and social conventions, a petty-minded vanity, and narrow selfishness. Add to this the not infrequent cases of treason and treachery on the part of ministers and other officials...¹⁰¹

That the Hindus did not certainly lack in pride towards their country and culture has been testified by al-Bīrūnī when he writes,

According to their [Hindus'] belief, there is no other country on earth but theirs, no other race of man but theirs, and no created beings besides them have any knowledge or science whatsoever. 102

¹⁰¹ Saran, Paramatma and Majumdar, R C. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 128 102 Alberuni's India, Vol. 1, p. 23

As Prof. Habib admits,

Hindu nationalism and there can be no other name for it - was aggressive and violent. 103

No doubt the Hindu States were forever engaged in internecine conflicts among themselves but such quarrels were a common feature of the Middle Ages everywhere in the world and more so in Central Asia. In his hour of triumph Muhammad bin Qasim was called back from Sindh and tortured to death [by Abū al-Walīd Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmān] under the orders of Caliph Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik. 104 Similarly, General Mūsa, one of the greatest generals of early Islam and the conqueror of Northern Africa and Spain, was made to stand in the sun until exhausted, by orders of the Caliph and ended his life "...as a beggar in a remote village of al-Ḥijāz..."105 And even as Maḥmūd was engaged in his Indian expeditions, a fierce conflict was raging for supremacy in Central Asia. In 1006, Mahmūd had to hasten back from Mültan to Ghazni to meet the attack of the Turkish Ilak Khān [of the Qarakhānīd dynasty]. Ibrāhīm of Ghaznī (r. 1059-99) could only divert his attention towards the conquest of Indian territories after he had felt secure from the danger of the Saljuq attacks because of his son Mas'ūd III's marriage with Mahd-i-'Irāq (sister of Sultān Sanjar, the Saljūq emper-

¹⁰³ Habib, Mohammad. 'Indian Culture and Social Life at the Time of Turkish Invasion.' Journal of Aligarh Historical Research Institute. Vol. 1. Aligarh: Aligarh Historical Research Institute, 1941

¹⁰⁴ The Origins of the Islamic State. Part 2. Tr. Murgotten, Francis Clark. New York: Columbia University, 1924. p. 224 [Translation of the Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān of al-Balādhurī. —Ed.]

¹⁰⁵ Hitti, Philip K. History of the Arabs. Third edition. London: Macmillan and Co., 1946. p. 498

or). 106 The later Ghazavide rulers had to flee to India a number of times to escape the fury of this 'internecine' conflict. The city of Ghaznī was kept burning for seven days in 1151 by 'Alā'ud-Dīn Jahān-sūz. The last of the Yamīnī rulers, Khusrau Shāh was driven out of Ghaznī which was occupied by the Ghuzz Turks, who in turn were removed by the Ghorides. And even as the lieutenants of Mu'izz al-Dīn were expanding and consolidating his dominions in India, he himself was signally defeated at the Battle of Andkhud by the Khwarezmian [Khwārāzmṣāhyān] army in 1205. If such almost intermittent struggle among the Muslims of Central Asia did not prevent them from expanding their rule over other lands, it is useless to blame Indian rulers' internecine struggles for their ultimate collapse.

That Indians were fully alive to the dangers of foreign invasion and their love of the country was equally matched by desire to fight for it, is a reality that can be substantiated. Each wave of Muslim invasion created a profound stir among the Indian States and they often pooled their resources to meet the aggressor. The first such known confederacy was organised in 738 CE, when Gujarat's Pulakeśin and Danti-durga, the ruler of Berar [Achalpur, Amravati district, Maharashtra] and the real founder of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa-s, joined hands to repulse the Arab invasion. Both were still the feudatories of the Cālukyan king Vikramāditya II, and their Cālukyan lord appreciated their heroism by conferring the titles of *Pṛthvī-vallabhā* and *Avani-janāśraya* ('asylum of the people of the world') on Pulakeśin, and *Pṛthvī-val-*

¹⁰⁶ Khan, Ghulam Mustafa. 'A History of Bahrām Shāh of Ghaznīn.' Islamic Culture. Vol. 23, No. 1/2. Hyderabad: The Islamic Culture Board, 1949. p. 64

labhā and Khadgāvaloka ('one whose sight is as sharp as a sword') on Danti-durga. 107

Mora) on the illustrious ruler of Kāśmīr, Lalitāditya Mukta-pida took up the challenge of the Arabs and itya Mukus P was perhaps the only Hindu ruler to have attacked the was perhaps are detacked the roots of the Arab power. He formed an alliance with the Shāhi rulers of Kābul and Zābul and led an expedithe Shan which the Uttara-patha to the Tukhāra country (Tukhāristān¹⁰⁸). In league with Yaśovarman, the ruler of Kanauj, he even sent embassies to China. 109

Then again, at the end of the tenth century CE, fifteen years before Maḥmūd began his Indian expeditions, we hear of a confederacy of Indian States to help Jaya-pāla, the ruler of Punjab and Lamghan against Subūk-tigin. If we believe Firișta, the Tomara-s of Delhi, Cāhamāṇa-s of Ajmer, and Candela-s of Kāliñjar along with many other neighbouring countries sent contingents to help

the Shāhi king. As D C Ganguly writes,

...it is legitimate to conclude from Firishta's statement that northern India was fully aware of the grave peril caused by the menace of Islam, and her people gave practical evidence of their love for their country and religion by willingly offering to sacrifice their lives in the

108 [Also called Bāhlīka, Bactria, or Balkh; a region of Central Asia that lay north of the Hindukush mountain range and south of the Amu Darya river, covering the region of modern-day Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. —Ed.]

109 See supra Chapter 2. Invasion of Sindh by the Arabs

¹⁰⁷ Navsāri Grant of Pulakeśin (quoted supra Chapter 5. Raids of Muslims - Mostly Unrecorded by Muslim Historians but Referred to in Sanskrit Inscriptions) and Ellora Plates of Danti-durga (see p. 26 of Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 21) - Inference drawn from the above by Anant Sadashiv Altekar; see p. 2 in The Age of Imperial Kanauj. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 4). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1955

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bleak hills of far distant Afghānistān which was almost a terra incognita to them. 110

In 1008 CE, once again after twenty years, on the appeal of Ānanda-pāla—according to Firiṣta—many rājās of Hindustān sent large contingents to his aid. The Khokhar-s of the Punjab also joined the Shāhi-s. Maḥmūd did not dare to take the offensive and used some six thousand archers to incite his enemies to attack. But for the flight of Ānanda-pāla's elephant after being struck by the arrows, the result of the battle might have been different.

Another confederacy of Indian kings was formed in 1043 CE¹¹¹ under Mahī-pāla, the king of Delhi, and Hānsī, Thanesar, and Kangra were wrested from the Ghaznavides. It is really a pity that the confederate forces had only the limited objective of liberating the holy places of Kangra and Nagarkot and did not march on to liberate the whole of Punjab from the Ghaznavide rule. Firiṣta speaks about the siege of Lahore, but this seems to have been the work of the local chiefs of Punjab and therefore failed to succeed.

That there was disunity among the three principal States of Northern India at the time of Mu'izz al-Dīn's invasion cannot be denied. Pṛthvī-rājā did not go to the help of the Caulukya-s and the Cāhamāṇa-s of Naddūla in their hour of trial. That there was bad blood between Pṛthvī-rājā and Jaya-candra can also be admitted. But all the three were united in their determined resolution to defend their kingdom against foreign invaders

¹¹⁰ Ganguly, D C. The Struggle for Empire. 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' (Vol. 5). Gen. Ed. Majumdar, R C. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957. p. 4

¹¹¹ Tārīķ-i-Firișta, p. 118

individually. The queen-mother of the Caulukyan king, individually. The queen-mother of the Caulukyan king, Nāyakī-devī led her forces to victory in 1178. The one hundred and fifty chiefs who had assembled under hundred and fifty chiefs who had assembled under hundred and fifty chiefs who had assembled under pythvī-rājā III before the Second Battle of Tarā'īn had, pythvī-rājā to Firiṣṭa, "...sworn by the water of Ganges, according to Firiṣṭa, "...sworn by the water of Ganges, that they would conquer their enemies, or die martyers to their faith." Jaya-candra too had proudly claimed that his father had "...swept away the affliction of the globe..." caused by Hammīra, "...the abode of wanton destruction to the earth." He himself lost no time after the defeat of Pṛthvī-rājā to start preparations for the final clash with the Ghoride army. The news probably brought Mu'izz al-Dīn hurrying from Ghaznī to Candrāvara [today's Firozabad].

The fact that in spite of their disunity, each of the chief Rājpūt kings was able to field an army superior in numerical strength to the Muslim forces, obliges us to conclude that disunity among themselves did not weaken their individual resolve to fight the alien invader and therefore, disunity by itself, cannot be pleaded as a

cause for their defeat.

What the Rājpūt-s really lacked was a spirit of aggression, so conspicious among the Muslims, and a will to force the war in the enemy's dominions and thus destroy the base of his power. In the whole of the long period covering more than five centuries, the Indian armies carried their arms to foreign lands only twice. Once the Kāśmīr king, Lalitāditya Mukta-pīḍa led his forces to Tukhāristān in league with the Shāhi-s and eliminated the Tukhāra-s and the Turuṣka-s surround-

¹¹² Ibid., p. 175

¹¹³ The Indian Antiquary. Vol. 15. Eds. Fleet, John Faithfull and Temple, Richard Carnac. Bombay: Education Society's Press, 1886. p. 9

ing his kingdom. The next Indian ruler to carry arms against the foreign bases was Jaya-pāla, the Shāhi king, who twice led his forces beyond the Indus against Subūk-tigin. Except for these rare instances, we never find any Indian king attempting to liquidate even the foreign bases outside India. Sindh was the first Indian kingdom to be conquered by the Muslims. Here the tiny Arab prinicipalities of Mültan and Mansürah might have been swept away by the Gurjara-Pratihara-s but the fear of destruction of the temple of Multan restrained them. But, as Al-Bīrūnī informs us, when the Qarmatians occupied Mültān (somewhere in the latter half of tenth century CE), they [i.e., Jalam ibn Shaibān] destroyed the temple and killed its priests.114 The empire of the Gurjara-Pratihāra-s had passed its prime by this time but no other Rājpūt king ever thought of capturing Mültän. With Mültän in foreigners' hands, "...the country was at all times open to his invasions."115

The Rājpūt-s, perhaps, lacked the full geographical knowledge of their own country and consequently the best means to defend their own land could not be devised by them. Such knowledge had been supplied to the foreigners by the Arab travellers and geographers of the ninth to twelfth centuries CE, and contributed a great deal to their eventual success. Maḥmūd of Ghaznī had an efficient Department of Secret Intelligence known as Dīwān-i-Shughl-i-Ishrāf-i-Mamlukat. He employed persons of both sexes as spies, who travelled to foreign lands in disguise to collect useful information for the Sultān. 116 Al-Bayhaqī also informs us that the

¹¹⁴ Alberuni's India, Vol. 1, p. 116

¹¹⁵ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 459

¹¹⁶ Nāzim, Muḥammad. The Life and Times of Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghazna. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931. p. 144

spies of Sultān Maḥmūd "...counted the very breaths of the Khāns of Turkistān." The Lalita-vigraha-rāja-nāṭa-ka [Act 4, line 16] of Soma-deva represents a Muslim spy, disguised as a pilgrim to Somanātha. 118

Similarly, the Hindus failed to take advantage of the weakness of the later Ghaznavide rulers and overthrow their rule in the Punjab. Illustrious rulers were not lacking in India in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Karņa of the Kalacuri-s, Bhoja of the Paramāra-s, Govinda-candra of the Gāhaḍavāla-s, Jaya-siṃha Siddha-rājā and Kumāra-pāla of the Caulukya-s, and Vigraha-rājā IV of the Cāhamāṇa-s – each of them could have overthrown the Yamīnī rule in the Punjab but they never tried. Only once in 1043 CE was a concerted action against the Ghaznavide made and it achieved its limited objective of liberating the holy places of Thanesar and Nagarkot. It is a pity that they did not carry their mission further and eliminate the Islamic State from Punjab, which constituted a grave danger to the whole of India.

Foresight and an all-India perspective – that is what the Rājpūt-s lacked. A strong central government for even the whole of Northern India, which could think and act for the whole of country, had been lacking since the days of Harṣa-vardhana. Only such a government like that of the Maurya-s ruling through its Governors to keep in check the fissiparous tendencies in the provinces and maintaining a well-organised regular army, could follow a policy of aggrandizement against its foes

¹¹⁷ Ibid. (Citing Abu'l-Fadl Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī's

Tārīķ-us-Subūk-tigīn, p. 846) 118 Cited by Dasharatha Sharma in Early Chauhān Dynasties (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1959) on p. 266

and rid the country of foreign rule. But for the Rājpūt rulers, dig-vijaya only signified wars without end among themselves, without any assumption of administrative responsibility in the conquered territory. The practice of leaving the administration of the conquered territories in the hands of feudatories resulted in an almost endless tussle between the two. In such circumstances, peace and stability even within a kingdom remained always precarious. The Rājpūt rulers, therefore, found it difficult to look beyond the territorial limits of their own kingdoms and their regional interests pushed the national issues into the background.

Finally, the differences in the military organisation, methods of warfare, and military strategy and tactics among the Rājpūt-s and the Muslims contributed in no small measure to the eclipse of the former. The Rajput army was invariably organised on a feudal basis, the holders of the jagirs being required to serve the ruler with a number of horses and soldiers. Firista mentions one hundred and fifty such feudal lords who fought under Pṛthvi-rājā III in the Second Battle of Tarā'īn.119 These feudal levies, with no unity of training and organisation, coming together at the last moment, fighting under the leadership of and for their individual leaders, could not be expected to beat back an enemy that was united in purpose and organisation and acted as one co-ordinated unit. The only medieval historian to throw any light on the cause of Muslim success, Fakhr-i-Mudabbir [also spelt Fakr-e Modabber; nom de plume of Faqr al-Din Muḥammad bin Manṣūr bin Sa'īd], writes in a similar vein.

¹¹⁹ Täriķ-i-Firișta, p. 175

A commander with a heterogeneous army consisting of soldiers (drawn from different sources)—hundred from here and hundred from there—cannot achieve anything. An army with so varied and so many component elements has never been able to achieve anything great. 120

As regards the weapons of warfare used by the two armies, the use of elephants by the Rājpūt-s cannot be counted as a defect in itself. The value of the elephants, especially before the advent of artillery, was admitted even by Muslim kings. Mahmud of Ghazni used them effectively for his campaigns in Central Asia. But too heavy a reliance on sheer weight of the elephants, unsupported by a swiftly moving cavalry, resulted in a loss of mobility, which was the key success for the Turkish armies. The elephant may be said to have been responsible for the defeat of Indian kings in another way. The Rajpūt king, seated on an elegantly decorated elephant with a royal umbrella overspread, could be easily detected from afar. The Turks on a number of occasions concentrated on the elephant seating the leader, and by wounding the elephant or its rider, succeeded in turning possible defeats into victories. In the Battle of Waihind in 1008 CE, as al-'Utbi says, "...it had nearly happened that the army (of the Sultán) were wounded (worsted), and that the infidels had obtained the high hand."121

¹²⁰ Adab al-Harb wa-l-Shaja'at (Rotograph of ms. in the British Museum) ff. 147 a. b. Ed. Kureishy, 'Abdul Wahid

Cited by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami in Some Aspects of Religion and Poltics in India during the Thirteenth Century (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1961) on p. 81 in fn. 2

¹²¹ Reynolds, James. The Kitab-i-Yamini, Historical Memoirs of the Amír Sabaktagın, and the Sutlán Mahmúd of Ghazna. London: The Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1858. p. 340 [Translated from the Tāriķ-i-Yamīnī of al-'Utbī. —Ed.]

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But "...becoming unruly due to the effects of the naptha balls, and the flights of arrows [directed against it, the elephant of Ānanda-pāla] turned and fled." Similarly, in the Battle of Candrāvara, Jaya-candra had almost carried the day when he,

...seated on a lofty howdah, received a deadly wound from an arrow and "fell from his exalted seat to the earth." 123

In that age, loss of the leader meant loss of the day. In the First Battle of Tarā'in, the Muslim army too, not seeing their leader, fled headlong from the battlefield and did not draw rein till they had reached a place of safety.

The cavalry and mounted archers of the invading armies gave them a decisive superiority over the home forces. The Indian rulers too maintained cavalry units. It will be wrong to say that the Hindus had no active cavalry units. The merchant Sulaymān al-Tājir who had travelled over a large part of Asia in the ninth century CE singles out for praise the cavalry of the Gurjara-Pratihāra king when he writes, "...no other Indian prince has so fine a cavalry." Firiṣta too testifies to their us in large numbers in the Second Battle of Tarā'in. But the Arabic and Turkoman horses were much better adopted to warfare and their superiority resulted in the continuous import of the Central Asian breed into India. As Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes,

¹²² Tärik-i-Firişta, p. 47

¹²³ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 2, p. 223 (Citing the Tāju'l Ma'āsir of Nizāmu'd-Dīn Hasan Nizāmī)

¹²⁴ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. 1, p. 4

¹²⁵ Tāriķ-i-Firişta, p. 175

The Turks were so famous for the speed and vigour of their cavalry charges that in the Asiatic world the phrase Turk-Sawar (i.e. Turkish horseman) became a general name for the richly accoutred superbly mounted dashing cavalry of any race. 126

After cavalry, the second strong point of the Turkish military machine was its mounted archery. Their deadly arrows easily covered a range of eighty to hundred paces and as pointed out by R C Smail,

They used the bow from the saddle, and shot without halting or dismounting. As a result they were able to combine their archery with tactical uses of their mobility...¹²⁷

Reference of archery among the Indian armies after the age of the Epics is conspicuous by its absence.

Lastly, the strategy and tactics employed by the invaders on the battlefield proved decisive in their favour. Indians failed to keep pace with the developments of military strategy taking place in Central Asia even before the advent of Islam. The Arabs and Turks perfected them. These consisted in first harassing the enemy from all sides by light mounted archers who would even pretend sham defeat and flight. This was followed by the charge of regular heavy armoured cavalry. Then there was the reserve, standing by to assist any flank in the even of distress. As against this, the Indian army continued to be posted in one long formation divided in three parts – right wing, centre, and left wing. The en-

¹²⁶ Sarkar, Jadunath. Military History of India. Calcutta: M C Sarkar and Sons, 1960. p. 27

¹²⁷ Smail, R C. Crusading Warfare 1097-1193. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956. pp. 80-81

emy could easily steal round the wings and molest the army from behind. The leader of the forces also could be easily detected and flights of arrows directed at him.

Besides, the traditional Rājpūt chivalry looked upon the battle as a ritual or a tournament for displaying their fighting skill and swordsmanship under well-recognised rules of sport. Did not Manu, the ancient law-giver proclaim –

...a battle was ideally a gigantic tournament with many rules: a warrior fighting from a chariot might not strike one on foot; an enemy in flight, wounded or asking quarter might not be slain; the lives of enemy soldiers who had lost their weapons were to be respected; poisoned weapons were not be used. Homage and not annexation was the rightful fruit of victory. 128

The Arabs and Turks, on the other hand, knew no rules and waged a grim and ruthless struggle to destroy their enemies. Sudden attacks; manoeuvring under the cover of darkness; pretending defeat and flight; and keeping a large reserve, to be used only on critical moments – all these took the Indians by surprise and crippled their fighting capacity.

The Indians never tried to take advantage of their enemy's weakness and perhaps considered it unchivalrous to do so. King Dāhir made no attempt to attack Muḥammad bin Qāsim when the latter lay encamped for two months on the bank of the Indus paralysed by sickness among his horses. The Shāhi king Ānanda-pāla, with ill-conceived magnanimity, even offered to help Maḥmūd of Ghaznī, when the latter was engaged

¹²⁸ Basham, A L. The Wonder that was India. London: Sigwick and Jackson, 1954. p. 126 (Citing the Manu-smṛti)

in a life and death struggle aginst Ilak Khān. Pṛthvī-rā-jā III, similarly allowed the defeated Muslim army after the First Battle of Tarā'īn to return unmolested to Ghaznī. Such magnanimity on the part of Indian kings might have been in accord with the humane dictates of the Hindu śāstras but was a sure invitation to disaster against a ruthless foe who recognised no moral or ideological scruples in the pursuit of victory. 129

In the whole of the Rājpūt period, nay, even in whole of Ancient India, the Indian kings do not seem to have organised any spy system (which only exists in the pages of Kauṭilya's Artha-śāstra) to know, much less to exploit the weakness of their adversaries. The Muslim invaders, on the other hand, possessed the knowledge about every inch of India's territory and the nature of its kingdoms from the accounts of the Muslim traders, travellers, and geographers. In the absence of such knowledge, it is no wonder that the Rājpūt kings could not liberate even the Indian provinces of Punjab and Sindh from Muslim rule; not to speak of liquidat-

^{129 [}The tragic irony of such episodes in Hindu history is that the human values espoused by Sanātana-dharma—the grand, inclusive vision of the Vedas and the universal, non-dualistic fundamentals of Vedānta that make Hinduism markedly different from all other dogmas of exclusivity—are the very values that render the tolerant Hindu helpless against unscrupulous bigots. Only the wisdom of great minds like Bhagavān Śrīkṛṣṇa, Kauṭilya (Cāṇakya), and Vidyāraṇya can guide us in such circumstances. Kṣātra (spirit of valour and protection) tempered by Brāhma (spiritual vision) alone can come to our aid.

In the words of Sita Ram Goel, "Hindu society owes it to its own survival...to put the record straight so that no one dares divorce Hindu spirituality from Hindu heroism, Hindu nation from the Hindu homeland, and Hindu culture from the national culture of India." - p. 3 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India. 1984) —Ed.]

ing the enemy bases outside the country, which alone could have earned the country a permanent immunity from foreign invaders.

In the end, a word of tribute is due, to the able and great leadership of the Arab and Turkish generals who succeeded in India. It has to be noted, however, that only the best among the Arabs and Turks could succeed in India. A host of others, who tried before and after them, failed miserably to extend their gains. Only Muhammad bin Qāsim, with his excellent qualities of leadership and policy, which was an admirable mixture of firmness and moderation, could succeed in conquering Sindh and Mültan which had proved to be the graveyard of a host of Arab generals before him. Then, Maḥmūd of Ghaznī, whose victories not only in India but also in Central Asia, mark him out as one of the greatest military leaders of all ages, could for the first time, after nearly four centuries of the birth of Islam, succeed in carrying the arms of Islam into the interior of India. But he too considered it safe to annex only province of Punjab, to his kingdom. But his successors, as we have seen, failed miserably to extend the territories of his dominions in India.

Then came Mu'izz al-Dīn, who was not a general of the same calibre as Maḥmūd, but what he lacked on this score, he more than made up by his resoluteness of spirit and determiniation of character. A man who abstained from his wife's bed and had not changed the clothes on his body¹³⁰ after his defeat in the First Battle of Tarā'īn, deserved to succeed in India. No wonder

¹³⁰ The Tabakāt-i-Nāṣiri of Minhāj-i-Sirāj. Tr. Raverty, H G. London: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873. p. 465, fn. 7 [Translated from the original Persian chronicle. —Ed.]

that his character inspired among his lieutenants an absolute faith and devotion towards him. Mu'izz al-Dīn's statement that his slaves were his sons and would succeed him, shows the implicit faith that he had in them. Trusting them as he himself was trusted by his brother, his faith in his slaves was fully vindicated as they, more than anyone else, were responsible for the stabilization and expansion fo the Islamic kingdom founded by him on the Indian soil. As H C Ray concludes, "The Indians were not less brave; but they failed to produce a Maḥmūd or a Mu'izz-ud-Dīn." 131

But the fact, which is not easily recognised by all historians is, that it took Islam five and three-quarter centuries to produce the twain.



¹³¹ Ray, Hem Chandra. The Dynastic History of Northern India. Vol. 2. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1936. p. 1218

Conclusion

N THE PRECEDING pages, I have attempted to give a comprehensive picture of the Indian resistance to the early Muslim invaders on the cultural as well as on the political-militaristic plane. Only a few words will suffice as concluding remarks.¹

More than anything else, the cultural resistance of the Hindus stands out in bold relief. That the Hindus lacked social solidarity is an admitted fact. In Sindh, the first Indian State to face the Arab invaders, the Buddhists and the Mid-s did help the invader. But no one was prepared to lose one's own religious or cultural identity. The Arab merchant Sulaymān al-Tājir, writing about one and a half centuries after the Arab invasion of Sindh, complaints that "...none among the native of

^{1 [}Sita Ram Goel puts forth two major highlights of the present work – "Dr. Misra's monograph...highlights Hindu heroism in the face of an inveterate Islamic imperialism... Secondly, it presents an authentic portrait of Islam as a political ideology of aggressive and tenacious imperialism which will not stop at any means or methods in order to achieve its ultimate aim – the conquest of all non-Muslim lands and the conversion of all infidels (non-Muslims). Islam has legitimised in the name of its godling, Allah, and from the mouth of its prophet, Muhammad, not only a permanent war against the unbelievers but also the plunder, slaughter, and enslavement of all those who get defeated in war, or allow themselves to be subverted otherwise." – p. 37 of Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984) —Editor]

India or China had embraced the Muslim faith or could speak the Arabic language."2 The Arab experiment of speak the sword, which had succeeded in extirpating fire and in other lands, failed dismally in India. As sir William Muir remarks, "...in India a new leaf was Sir William Side by side with Allah, idols were allowed to be worshipped only if tributes were duly paid. Later, weak Arab rulers of Mültän not only tolerated but encouraged idol-worship for their own political survival.4

The Turkish invaders too encountered the same stiff cultural resistance from the Hindus. Even those converted to Islamic faith took the first opportunity to go back to their ancestral fold. Sukha-pāla, the son of Ānada-pāla, who had been converted to Islam under the name of Nawasa Shah, renounced it at the first opportunity. That death was no deterrent to the Hindus in matters of faith is proved by the fact that at Somnath alone, fifty thousand men laid down their lives for the defence of their idols even when there was no hope of victory. Maḥmūd of Ghaznī in spite of his iconoclastic zeal, had to grant full religious freedom in his own capital of Ghaznī to the Hindu soldiers he employed for the stability of his kingdom. The coins of the later Ghaznavide Sultāns carry the title of Śrī Sāmanta-deva in Sanskrit, which tells its own tale.

The policy of the Shansabānī Turks, the last of the early Muslim invaders, was marked by a cautious approach in matters of faith. They avoided in a significant

² Sulaiman Saudagar (Hindi Translation), p. 84 Cited by Anant Sadashiv Altekar in The Rāshtrakūṭas and Their Times (Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1934) on p. 415

³ Muir, William. The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall. Edin-

burgh: John Grant, 1924. p. 355 4 See supra Chapter 2. Invasion of Sindh by the Arabs

measure acts of religious fanaticism or vindictiveness. The advice of *Wazir* Junaidi⁵ to Iltutmish against following a policy of 'Death or Islam' in India signifies the cautious approach of the early Muslim rulers in matters of faith.

What was the secret of this cultural vitality of the Hindus? What enabled them to retain their separate cultural and religious identity even after five centuries of Muslim rule? Much has been written about the social decadence of the Hindus at the time of the early Muslim invasions. The fact remains to be explained that while country after country from the Strait of Gibraltar to the banks of the Indus lost their cultural and religious identity within a hundred years of the rise of Islam, how and why "...even under Moḥammadan rule, India remained largely a pagan land"6?

The secret of the strength of Indian culture lay in its steadfast adherence to the eternal human values of tolerance, truthfulness, and a belief in the innate goodness of man – a fact testified by the Muslim writer of the twelfth century, al-Idrisi. These ideals had been enshrined in the shape of idols [mūrtis] of gods and goddesses for whom Indians were prepared to lay down their lives in numbers innumerable. Besides, the social institutions of the Hindus, the joint family, the caste [varṇa], the village panchayat, and the working class guilds – all these had taught them loyalty to the group rather than the individual. These social and economic institutions were to sustain Hinduism even when their

⁵ See supra Chapter 7. The Real Nature of India Resistance and the Causes of Indian Defeat

⁶ Muir, William. The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall. Edinburgh: John Grant, 1924. p. 355

⁷ See supra Chapter 1. The Expansion of Islam and its Confrontation with India's Cultural Vitality

political system collapsed against the Muslims.

Even on a politico-militaristic plane, the Muslims did not attain in India the kind of success they achieved in other countries of the three continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe. The real significance of Indian resistance will become apparent only if two things are kept in view. First is that it needed more than five and a half centuries of effort on the part of the Muslims to establish their hold on the Indian heartland - a period that is even greater than their total length of effective rule over Northern India. The second point to be kept in view is that by the middle of the seventh century CE, when the Arabs began their raids on the Indian border, they had already become the greatest and most powerful force on earth and the two great contemporary empires—the Byzantine and the Sāsānīd—had collapsed against their might.

Against this background, the prolonged resistance of the Indian border State of Sindh, lasting as many as seventy-five years before its downfall in 712–13 CE, becomes apparent. For a short spell thereafter, "...Arab invaders... made their influence deeply felt in Rajputana, Kathiawar and Gujarat." But the Arabs signally failed to extend their gains in India and shortly afterwards their gains in Sindh too were reduced to a precarious hold on the two petty States of Mūltān and Mansūrah.

Further north, the Indian ruling dynasty of the Shāhi-s held its own in the tiny State of Kābul and Zābul for more than two hundred and twenty years against the mighty Arabs. Such was the fame acquired by 'Ranbal'—the title assumed by the successive rulers

⁸ Bhandarkar, Devadatta Ramakrishna. 'Slow Progress of Islam Power in Ancient India.' Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Vol. 10, No. 1/2. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1929. p. 31

of the tiny State—that their fame spread throughout the length and breadth of the Caliph's possessions. Even after their temporary eclipse in Kābul by the ruse of Ya'qūb ibn Lāyth in 867 CE, the Shāhi-s continued their successful resistance against the Muslim invaders for another one and half centuries from their capital at Udabhāṇḍapura. The Ghaznavide conqueror, Maḥmūd dared not proceed beyond the Punjab until he had finally extinguished the power of the Shāhi-s. Only after three generations of the Shāhi monarchs had sacrificed their lives, did these guardians of the northwestern border allow the invaders to descrate the Indian heartland.

It would be once again taking an unbalanced view of things if we merely emphasize the victories of the great Ghazanvide conqueror, Maḥmūd, without stressing the sustained Indian resistance that he faced in this country. In the Battle of Waihind in 1008 CE, he had almost despaired of victory. On seeing Vidyā-dhara Candela's army, he repented of his coming to India. From Somnath, Maḥmūd had to beat a hasty retreat through a less-frequented route for fear of the federated armies of the Hindus. The later Ghazanvide Sultāns could hardly maintain their hold on the Punjab, the sole Indian annexation of Maḥmūd.

Mu'izz al-Dîn Muḥammad faced even stiffer resistance. He was beaten twice before getting hold of Delhi. The Second Battle of Tarā'īn and the Battle of Candrāvara, which resulted in the defeats of Pṛthvī-rājā and Jaya-candra respectively, were both evenly con-

⁹ Elliot, H M and Dowson, John. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period. Vol. 2. London: Trübner and Co., 1869. p. 418

¹⁰ The Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī. Vol. 1. Tr. De, B. Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society, 1927. p. 12 [Translated from the chronicle of Khwājah Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad Bakh-shī. —Ed.]

tested and it were only Mu'izz al-Din's manoeuvres and strategies that titled the balance in his favour.

Numerous causes have been advanced to explain the final collapse of the Indian resistance in the last decade of twelfth century CE. Many of these, discussed in greater detail in the previous chapter, do not stand the test of carful scrutiny. Much has been made of the 'internecine fighting' among the Rājpūt-s. It has been claimed that -

Internecine warfare has always been the bane of the Rajputs... The condition of India at this time resembled that of Germany at the end of the eighteenth century...and... the Rajput kingly families fell before Shihabuddin as the Germanic states severally fell before Napoleon. 11

It is difficult to agree with this assessment of the downfall of Northern India. Nationalism as we know it today is certainly a much later phenomenon. Infighting was regular feature of the Middle Ages everywhere in the world, in what was known as the Age of Chivalry. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the Muslims were as much plagued by this 'internecine' fighting.12 In India, this internecine fighting had not weakened the resolve of the individual Indian States to defend themselves against the foreign invaders and this fact is evidenced by the large number of forces put on the field by each of the principal Indian States. Throughout the long period under review, there is no evidence on record that one Indian State sided with the Muslim invaders

12 See supra Chapter 7. The Real Nature of India Resistance and the

Causes of Indian Defeat

¹¹ Vaidya, Chintaman Vinayak. Downfall of Hindu India (c. 1000 to 1200 A.D.). 'History of Mediæval Hindu India' (Vol. 3). Poona: Chintaman Vinayak Vaidya, 1926. pp. 360 ff. (Chapter 23. Downfall of Northern India - Principal Causes)

against another Indian State. On the other hand, there are numerous instances when they combined among themselves to stem the tide of Muslim invasion. The Rāṣṭrakūta-s could be charged with following an anti-national policy by siding with the Muslims and fighting aginst the Gurjara-Pratihāra-s. But as Anant Sadashiv Altekar points out,

...the statements of these writers [Arab chroniclers]... [show] that the Rāshṭrakūṭas were partial to the Muslims, and that none but the Muslims ruled over the Muslims in their dominations, only show that the Muslim Kazis were allowed to look after the religious and judicial affairs of the foreign colony [of Muslims]. 13

Another much inflated reason for the defeat of the Rājpūt-s is the caste [varṇa] system. No doubt the armies of the Indians consisted manily of kṣatriyas with a sprinkling of brāhmaṇas and vaiśyas, but so long as there was no dearth of brave warriors in the Rājpūt ranks and their forces nearly always outnumbered the Muslims on the battlefield, it is difficult to hold the caste system as a primary cause of their defeat. At best, as pointed out in the previous chapter, the caste system can be held responsible for the lack of mass resistance to the alien rule after the collapse of the regular Rājpūt fighting machine.

To sum up the causes of the defeat of the Rājpūt-s, among the causes that need to be rejected outright are – the superiority of the Arabs and Turks as a fighting race; their religious zeal and fervour, since the Delhi Sultanate was ultimately established by the least religious-minded of them all; the internal disunity and 'in-

¹³ Altekar, Anant Sadashiv. The Rāshtrakūṭas and Their Times. Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1934. p. 415

ternecine' warfare among the Rājpūt-s, since this was the common feature of Medieval Ages everywhere in the world, and in spite of it the Rājpūt-s were seldom outnumbered in manpower and resources. Among the reasons that can be accepted only partially are – the caste system and the moral degeneration of the people, since there is no definite evidence that it affected the quality of the Rājpūt fighting machine and only manifested itself after its collapse in the shape of lack of mass resistance to, and acquiescence in, the alien rule.

Among the real causes of Rājpūt defeat can be counted - the absence, throughout the long period under review, of a national centralised monarchy in India, which alone could have given the Rājpūt-s a wider perspective of national, instead of regional defence, the latter remaining their ideal throughtout; the almost criminal neglect of the Rājpūt-s to liquidate the foreign pockets in Mültän and Punjab; their total failure to employ any spy system, which could have given them knowledge about foreign lands and internal weaknesses of their opponents - perhaps their insularity of outlook and the abhorrence of foreign travel, about which al-Bīrūnī speaks, was responsible for it; and above all, the defects of their military organisation and methods - the feudal basis of the army, their failure to match the invaders in the fields of cavalry and archery, their inability to take precautions against the feins and manoeuvres of the invaders, and lastly, the superior generalship and leadership displayed by Mahmūd of Ghaznī and Muḥammad of Ghori; all these really contributed to their ultimate downfall.

Epilogue

Dr. Ram Gopal Misra's detailed and insightful study of the stiff resistance offered by the Hindus to the tide of early Islamic invaders is an invaluable resource to all students of Indian history. It will be an eye-opener for general readers interested in history, for they have hitherto been exposed largely to Marxist and/or European versions of our history, which have systematically downplayed the valour and achievements of Hindus.

Sahitya Sindhu Prakashana of Bengaluru published a second edition of the treatise in 2008 and are now bringing out this third edition, which in addition to proofreading and cosmetic changes contains editorial notes that include the astute observations of Sita Ram Goel taken from his commentary on Dr. Misra's work. All editorial additions are given in square brackets.

Diacritical marks have been added for Sanskrit words and Arabic names. It is hoped that readers who are unfamiliar with the pronunciation of the words will find it useful. The standard spellings sans diacritical marks have been used for modern names. When citing other authors, however, their version of the diacritical marks and their spellings have been retained.

¹ Goel, Sita Ram. Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders. New Delhi: Voice of India, 1984

The Sanskrit inscriptions have been reproduced as printed in the source books (like Epigraphia Indica &c.) in spite of the fact that in a few cases there are spelling errors and violations of grammatical rules.

A rough map of Greater India has been provided (on p. 2) for easy reference. Many (but not all) cities and

towns that appear in the book have been marked.

All references and citations of this book have been cross-verified with the original treatises and journals (with one or two exceptions where the referred work could not be procured). All through this process, the Internet Archive (http://www.archive.org) proved to be immensely beneficial.

I am very grateful to Sri. K S Narayana of Sahitya Sindhu Prakashana for giving me the opportunity to edit and design the third edition of this remarkable work.

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I am truly beholden to Sri. Vighneshwar Bhat who supported me in every stage of preparation of this new edition and to Sri. Arjun Bharadwaj for his pertinent suggestions.

I fervently hope that the present work reaches a

wider audience, which it truly deserves.

15 August 2020 Bengaluru

Hari Ravikumar Editor

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